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I & II Kings

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KINGS

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Karm as Sayad
Cemetery of the Virgin Gallilæa
Catacombs
Greek Chapel of the Ascension
Church of the Tomb of the Virgin
Russian Church
Church of the Ascension
Mahometan Cemetery
Greek Gethsemane
Church of the Pater
Carmelites Convent
Tomb of Jehoshaphat & Absalom
Tombs of St James & Zechariah
Jewish Cemetery
Tombs of the Prophets
Mount of Olives (Jebel el Tur)
To Anathoth
To Bethany
To Jericho
Tombs
Slaughter Houses
Valley of the Kidron
Village of Siloam
Convent of Benedictines
Mount of Offence (Jebel Batn el Hawy)
Yemen Wells
Job's Well (Bir Eyub)
Old Well
Birket Sultan
Birket Mamilla
Gethsemane
Golden Gate
Stephen's Gate
Dome of the Rock
Mosque el Aksa
Double Gate
Triple Gate
The Virgin's Well
Slaughter Ho.
Burial Place of the Kings
Tower of James the Less
Tower of Hippicus
Tower of Phasaelus
Tower of Mariamne
Tomb of Helena
Tomb of Simon the Just
Tomb of Zechariah
Tomb of Absalom
Tomb of St James
Tomb of Jehoshaphat
Dome of the Chain
Dome of the Spirits
Dome of the Rock
Dome of the Ascension
Dome of the Tablet
Dome of the Prophet
Dome of the Sakhrah
Dome of the Mosque
Dome of the Mosque el Aksa
Dome of the Mosque el Aksa
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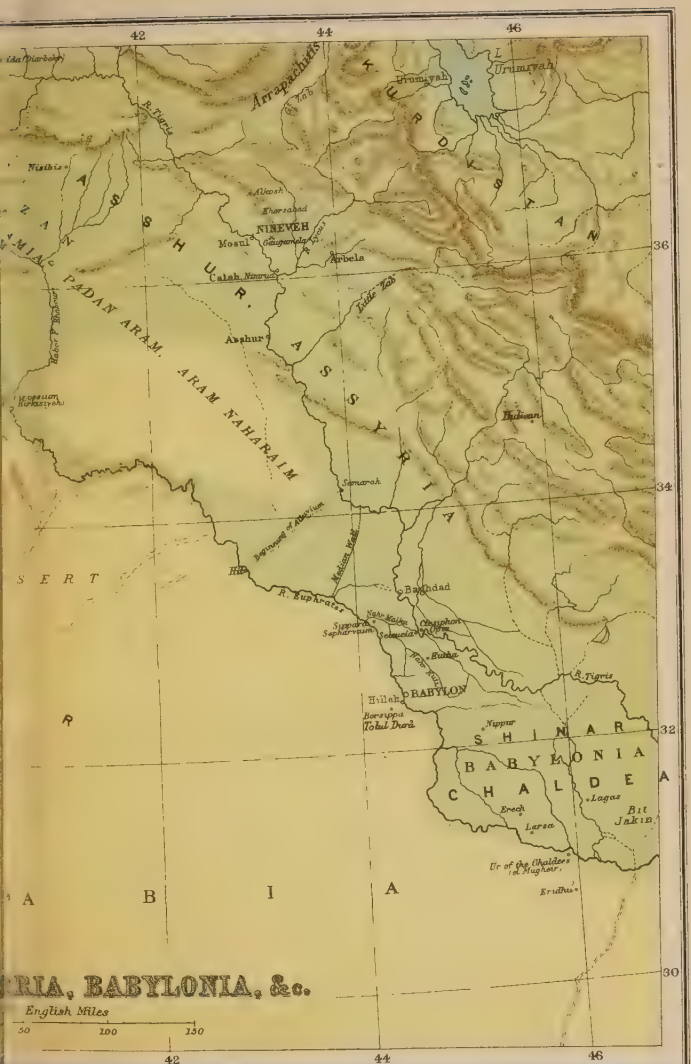

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The Century Bible

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Kings

INTRODUCTION
REVISED VERSION WITH NOTES
INDEX AND MAP

EDITED BY
REV. PROFESSOR SKINNER, D.D.

EDINBURGH: T. C. & E. C. JACK
AND 16 HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON, W.C.

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THE BOOK OF THE KINGS

INTRODUCTION

I AND II KINGS

INTRODUCTION

I. HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE BOOK.

THE historical writings of the O. T. (from which we exclude the five books of the Law) are in the Hebrew Canon sharply divided into two groups. The older group, consisting of the four books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, bore the title of 'The Earlier Prophets,' and forms the first half of the middle or Prophetic division of the Canon[1]. The later group was placed in the third part of the Canon (the so-called 'Writings'

[1] That Samuel and Kings formed each but one book originally is clear from the unnatural interruption of the narrative at the points of section; and is besides amply attested by external evidence. The partition was first made in copies of the LXX, where our books of Samuel and Kings appear as the First, Second, Third and Fourth books of 'Kingdoms.' From the LXX the division found its way into later versions; it was not introduced into Hebrew Bibles until after the invention of printing (second Bomberg Bible, 1517 A.D.). A trace of the secondary character of the partition even in the LXX remains in the fact that the Vatican MS. repeats in both cases the first verse of the second book at the end of the first book. This difference between the Hebrew and Greek texts was known to Origen and Jerome, the foremost representatives of Hebrew scholarship amongst the Fathers. Thus in Origen's list of O. T. books quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* vi. 25. 2) we read, 'First and Second Kingdoms, amongst them (the Jews) one—*Samuel*, "the called of God." Third and Fourth Kingdoms, in one—*Ouammelch David*, which means "the Kingdom (*sic*) of David."' Similarly Jerome, in his *Prologus galeatus*, speaks of 'Samuel, which we call First and Second Kingdoms,' and 'Kings, which is contained in the Third and Fourth volumes of Kingdoms.' We are therefore thoroughly justified in treating the Book of Kings as a single work.

or Hagiographa), and was composed of the two books of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, which in ordinary editions of the Hebrew Bible stand (in reversed order) at the close of the whole collection. To this difference of canonical position corresponds a marked diversity of character, which may best be expressed by saying that the two groups represent the labours of two distinct historical schools. The outstanding feature of the earlier group is what is termed the Deuteronomic redaction; that is to say, these books were thrown into shape and edited (in ways to be afterwards explained) by a school of writers who were influenced by the ideas of the Book of Deuteronomy. The other group (with which we are not further concerned) was produced at a much later date by an editor or editors whose standpoint, broadly speaking, was that of the Priestly Code[1].

The aim of a commentary on Kings is, of course, not to rewrite the history of the period by the help of the material which the book supplies, but to explain the history as written by entering as fully as possible into the point of view of the writers concerned in its production. And since the Book of Kings is on the whole the most complete and typical specimen of Hebrew historical writing which the O. T. contains, it is desirable to commence with some consideration of (1) the conception of

[1] Since the Deuteronomic redaction extends over all the books Joshua to Kings, the question is naturally raised whether they may not originally have been a continuous work, which was afterwards split up into four volumes. That cannot be proved to have been the case: the differences which appear in the redaction are too considerable to be readily accounted for by the assumption that they were all edited by the same hand. At the same time, it is true that the original sources from which the history was compiled run on from one book into another, and the division of these sources is somewhat artificial and arbitrary. It is interesting also to note that in the Lucianic recension of the LXX edited by Lagarde, the partition of Second and Third 'Kingdoms' occurs after 1 Kings ii. 11 of the Hebrew text (see Introductory Note to 1 K. i, ii.).

history to which the book owed its inception, and (2) the literary method which determined its form.

1. Writers on the science of history commonly recognize three distinct types of historical literature. There are first *narrative* or *descriptive* histories, whose object is simply to communicate or commemorate facts, and where the writer has no extraneous interest in his subject, but seeks merely to convey to his readers an accurate and vivid impression of the events whose importance has excited his attention. Then there is the large and influential class of *didactic* or *pragmatic* historians, who look on history as a storehouse of political or patriotic or ethical or religious lessons, and write it for the instruction or edification of their contemporaries. Lastly, there is the *scientific* or *genetic* view of history, which aims neither at being picturesque nor instructive, but seeks to exhibit events in their true relations to the great social and spiritual movements to which they owe their ultimate significance[1]. This last point of view is an almost exclusively modern development, and can hardly be said to be represented in antiquity at all. But the other two are almost equally ancient, and go back to near the fountain-head of written history. Thus, amongst classical historians, Herodotus, the 'father of history,' is generally regarded as a representative of the narrative style, and Thucydides and Tacitus of the pragmatic[2]. And of ancient histories in general it may be said that they belong to one or other of these two types, or else combine the characteristics of both.

To which, now, of these two classes shall we assign the Book of Kings? At first sight it might appear impossible to give a decided answer. The book contains some

[1] See Bernheim, *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode* (1894), p. 14 ff.

[2] The term *pragmatikē historia* appears to have been first used by the Greek historian Polybius, in the second century B.C. (Bernheim, l. c.).

purely descriptive passages, like the story of Solomon and Adonijah, or the account of Jehu's revolution, which produce the impression of having been written without any motive except an aesthetic interest in the thrilling series of events which they narrate. And alongside of these we might place the numerous annalistic statements of fact which, though destitute of literary charm, are nevertheless in themselves entirely free from personal predilection or didactic purpose. On the other hand there are many sections, such as the stories of Elijah and Elisha, or the narrative of the man of God at Beth-el (in 1 K. xiii), where the desire to enforce a religious lesson is unmistakably manifest. But the important point is that if we consider the book as a unity, and fix our attention on its persistent and characteristic features, we cannot fail to observe that it is dominated throughout by the aim of making the history a vehicle of moral and religious teaching. Interwoven with the narrative is a perpetually recurring strain of comment and application, the avowed purpose of which is to point out the great lessons which were seen to be exemplified in the past history of the people. And when we read the book in the light supplied by these comments, we find that nearly everything it contains is subservient to the main end of impressing these lessons on the minds of the readers. What the lessons are we shall consider more particularly when we come to deal with the standpoint of the author (p. 15 ff.). For the present it is enough to recognize that the Book of Kings is essentially a didactic history, in which, however, a certain element of purely narrative history has somehow been incorporated.

2. The last remark leads us to notice a no less important distinction in respect of *method* between the historiography of the O. T. and that with which we are familiar in modern times. The writing of history on a large scale necessarily involves the use of written authorities, which are the historian's sources of information for

events beyond his own personal knowledge; and nothing is more characteristic of the historical practice of the O. T. than the manner in which these authorities are dealt with. The modern history is a free and original composition, setting forth the view of the author and the conclusions he has reached after careful criticism and comparison of all the sources accessible to him. The Hebrew historian, on the other hand, was as a rule a compiler rather than an independent author; instead of writing a new account of the course of events as it shaped itself in his mind, he simply selected from the documents at his disposal passages which he deemed worthy of preservation, and then transferred these extracts bodily to his own pages. The method differs entirely from the mere quotation of authorities by modern writers; for it is only in the rarest instances that the source from which a passage is taken is indicated. The notions of literary property and plagiarism had not then been thought of; and writers who advanced no pretensions to originality for themselves were guilty of no imposture when they borrowed without acknowledgement from their predecessors. The evidence for these general statements is drawn from the historical literature of the O. T. as a whole. It is found that these writings without exception have originated in the manner just described; and a great part of the labour of scholars is directed to disentangling the various elements which enter into the composition, and to assigning each to its proper source. Hence we may reasonably anticipate that the same composite structure will be exhibited in the Book of Kings; and if the expectation should be confirmed, it will furnish a complete explanation of the alternation of descriptive with didactic sections which was spoken of above. For though it is certainly possible that such a combination might occur in the work of a single historian, it is much more natural to suppose that it arises from the collocation of different documents, some of them written with an interest different from the compiler's, and display-

ing a power of graphic and artistic narrative rarely found in union with a fixed homiletic bent of mind.

These observations will perhaps suffice to indicate the general character of the work with which we have to deal. At the same time they determine the lines on which the exposition of the book must proceed, and guide us in forming an estimate of its permanent historical and religious value.

First of all, bearing in mind the didactic and hortatory aim of the writing, we shall not expect it to give a complete view of the natural sequence of events. We shall not be surprised if prominence is given to occurrences of religious importance, to the neglect of matters which though interesting in themselves belonged more to the sphere of secular history. Still less need we look for an analysis of the subtle play of social and political forces which lay behind the phenomena, and which it would be the province of a modern historical investigator to explore. The Hebrew mind traced events directly to the agency of Providence, and attributed to each event an independent significance as an expression of the Divine will. Each, therefore, conveyed its own lesson; and nothing was lost by isolating it from its connexion with other events, provided it had a meaning unmistakable enough to be read by its own light. Although this conception of history may not satisfy all the demands of the intellect, it would be an utter mistake to suppose that it is vicious in principle, or destructive of the sense of historic truth. It is easy to understand the discredit into which the pragmatic method in history has fallen; but none the less it represents a point of view which cannot be rendered obsolete by any improvement in the conception of human development. That the past experience of a people as recorded in its national history is fitted to yield valuable guidance for the present and the future is a conviction too well established to be overthrown; and therefore, when the scientific historian has said his

last word, there will always be room for a writer of a different cast of mind to point out the lessons which the present may learn from the past. Most of all is such a treatment justified when the point of view is religious. The investigation of secondary causes, whether in nature or in history, does not exclude the belief in a Divine purpose unfolding itself through the manifold processes of the finite universe; and in the great crises of universal history the mind instinctively recognizes the presence and action of the Almighty. Who will say that the significance of an event like the destruction of Jerusalem is not more truly apprehended by the religious writer of the Book of Kings than by one who should regard it merely as an incidental result of the advance of mankind to a higher material civilization?

In the second place, we must not overlook the immense advantages of the Hebrew practice of incorporating earlier sources in the text. In default of the modern devices of footnotes and references to extant documents, it is difficult to conceive any method which could better serve the ends of genuine historical study. The authorities thus imbedded in the narrative are necessarily nearer to the events than the author of the book; and in certain cases we can be sure that they reflect the impressions of first-hand contemporary observers. To disentangle these original sources is no doubt a laborious and delicate operation; but in so far as it is accomplished, it puts us in possession of independent points of view, which not unfrequently throw light on matters passed over in silence by the editors of the book. We are thus enabled in some degree to trace the growth of religious ideas from the various stages at which the several documents were written down to the age of the latest editor who has left distinguishable marks of his individuality in his work.

Such, then, are the conditions of study imposed on us by the nature and composition of this instructive portion

of Scripture. The O. T. appeals to the religious mind in two ways: first as a direct word of God to the soul, and secondly as the record of a historic revelation, given to men in the past, of the Divine character and purpose. The two can never be wholly dissociated; but it is certainly the case that they appear with varying emphasis in different sections of the sacred literature. In the Psalms and the prophetic writings, for example, the note of inward religion is so direct and powerful that, without much acquaintance with the circumstances in which the words were written, the devout reader may hear the voice of the living God speaking plainly to his heart and conscience, and be lifted into true and saving fellowship with Him. Even there, it is true, half the profit of the message will be missed, unless the words be read in the light of the conditions which called them forth. But in those parts of the Scripture to which the Book of Kings belongs there is obviously less of this immediate and self-evidencing appeal to the heart. On the other hand, they are of inestimable value as a record of the process by which the revelation came to be, and of the facts in which inspired men recognized the presence of God in their national life. And here the historical method of study is almost indispensable to any profitable use of the writings. We need to realize, more fully than we have yet learned to do, that God was present in the history itself, not merely in the words in which the history is recorded, or in any theory of the history which may be current in a particular age. The nearer, therefore, we can come to the actual facts—the solid unimpeachable realities—of Israel's history, the better we shall understand the Divine training of that chosen race to be the bearers of revelation to mankind.

II. The Framework of Kings.

From what we have now learned of the general character and structure of Kings it is obvious that the

first step in the analysis of the book must be to trace the process by which it was first thrown into something like its present shape. It so happens that this inquiry is facilitated by a very clear indication of editorial activity, viz. the recurrence of a regular series of notices by which the different reigns are introduced and concluded. This set of formulas constitutes a sort of framework, by which the narrative is at once held together and at the same time divided into definite compartments; and its structure is so uniform as to make it practically certain that the scheme was carried through by a single writer. It will appear afterwards that the author of the 'framework' was the first to arrange the material in its present order, and is therefore entitled to be regarded as the main compiler of the Book of Kings[1].

It is worth while to look somewhat closely at the structure of this framework. The complete Introductory Formula for the kings of Judah embraces the following items: (*a*) the date of accession according to the year of the contemporary king of Israel (which we shall call for brevity the *Synchronism*); (*b*) the age of the king at his accession; (*c*) the duration of the reign; (*d*) the name of the queen-mother; (*e*) a judgement on the religious character of the reign. The corresponding formula for the kings of Israel is similar in form as regards *a*, *c*, and *e*; but is simplified by the omission of *b* (the age of accession), and *d* (the name of the queen-mother). The Concluding Formulas contain (*a*) a reference to the proximate source (see p. 23) from which the author has drawn some of his materials; (*b*) a notice of the king's death and burial; and (*c*) the name of his successor. With the exception of the Synchronisms, which were possible only for the period of the divided monarchy, the framework is applied consistently and with

[1] There are several facts, however, which suggest that the 'framework' in a somewhat simpler form was found in the proximate sources employed by the compiler.

few intermissions to the whole history, from the death of David (1 K. ii. 10) to the accession of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah (2 K. xxiv. 18 f.)[1]. The entire absence of either formula is extremely rare. And although fragments from the annals are frequently taken up into the framework, there is only one case (or at most two) where any considerable part of the narrative has been allowed, as it were, to slip out of the framework altogether; i. e. to appear between the conclusion of one reign and the introduction of the next: 2 K. ii (xiii. 14-25). How far these irregularities are designed, and how far they are due to alterations of the text, is a question that has to be considered for each case separately[2].

Now, even in the bare and formal statements of the framework there are several indications that its author is the person mainly responsible for the selection and disposition of the historical material of which the book is composed. (1) The chronology of the framework furnishes the key to the somewhat peculiar arrangement of the parallel histories of Israel and Judah. The method adopted is to treat the affairs of each kingdom independently, and carry forward the narrative till it reaches the end of a reign in which a change of sovereign has occurred

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[1] A feeble imitation of the framework appears also in the books of Samuel (1 Sam. xiii. 1; 2 Sam. ii. 10, 11; v. 4, 5). These have all the appearance of an attempt to extend the chronological system of Kings backwards to the earlier history.

[2] For minor variations (which are numerous but unimportant), displacements, &c., the reader must be referred to the Text (where the framework is marked by the letter D) and the Notes. The Introduction is nowhere entirely omitted except for the reigns of Jeroboam I, Athaliah, and Jehu: the Conclusion only in the cases of Jehoram of Israel, Ahaziah of Judah, Athaliah, Hoshea, Jehoahaz of Judah, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. In all these instances it is possible to assign plausible reasons for the omission; but it still remains doubtful whether the cases of Jehu, Jehoram, and Ahaziah are not rather to be explained by subsequent disturbances of the text. (See the Notes *ad loc.*)

in the sister kingdom. Then the records of the other monarchy are taken up, and continued in like manner, till they have gone beyond the date at which the first series stopped. Such an arrangement is obviously impossible without the control of a systematic chronology; and since the order corresponds perfectly with the data of the framework there is a presumption that both proceed from the same author. (2) The manner in which the writer of the framework refers to written documents for information which is not to be found in the book strongly suggests that he has exercised his personal judgement as to the matters that ought to be embodied in the history. (3) But the most important point is that in the religious judgements of the introductory formulas the writer reveals a definite theory or point of view, which could hardly fail to exert an influence on the historical presentation as a whole.

These judgements involve several religious principles: e.g. the duty of whole-hearted loyalty to Yahweh and the sinfulness of idolatry in all its varied forms and degrees. But their most distinctive feature is the idea of the exclusive sanctity of the Temple in Jerusalem and the illegitimacy of all sacrificial worship of Yahweh at other shrines. This is the meaning of the constant complaint that 'the high-places were not taken away' even by the most pious sovereigns of Judah (except Hezekiah and Josiah)[1]. The same principle underlies the uniformly unfavourable verdict on the kings of Ephraim; for it is expressly pointed out in 1 K. xii. 27 that the 'sin of Jeroboam'—the erection of the golden calves—was a deliberate defiance of the authority of the central sanctuary at Jerusalem. Now this idea was first introduced into the public religion of Israel by the promulgation of the law of Deuteronomy in the reign of Josiah (see

[1] The connexion is seen especially from 1 K. iii. 2, where it is intimated that the sacrifices of the high-places were at any rate a venial offence so long as no central Temple existed.

on 2 K. xxii f.); and indeed the framework itself testifies that it had been ignored by every ruler down to that time, with the solitary exception of Hezekiah (see on 2 K. xviii. 4). We thus learn that the author of the framework must have written after the publication of the Deuteronomic Law, and that his mind was so imbued with its teaching that he applied its central idea retrospectively as a measure of the religious condition of the people from the time when the Temple was built. It might almost be anticipated that a writer holding such a view of the inner significance of Israel's history would leave other and clearer traces of his individuality on the book.

III. The Compiler and his Standpoint.

We are therefore led to examine whether, apart from the framework, the Book of Kings contains any expression of what may be called the Deuteronomic standpoint. And the answer to that question is not difficult. Throughout the book we find a number of passages, easily separable from their context, which are strongly coloured not only by the spirit and ideas, but also by the language of the Book of Deuteronomy. Associated and often intermingled with the Deuteronomic phrases we find also a set of stereotyped expressions, figures of speech, &c., which, though not found in Deuteronomy itself, are characteristic of the style and vocabulary of the particular writer who inserted the Deuteronomic passages in Kings[1]; so that in most cases it is an easy task to distinguish his work from all other elements of the composition. The sections thus isolated are marked in the text by the letter **D**, and will be seen to be nearly all of the nature of comments designed to elucidate and enforce the religious lessons of the history. It cannot of course be absolutely proved that they are from the same hand as the framework; but

[1] Lists of both sets of phrases are given by Driver, *Introduction*[6], p. 200 ff., and Burney, in *DB*, ii. p. 859 ff.

since both represent an identical standpoint, and the character of each is essentially editorial, it is at least a reasonable assumption that they are the work of the same writer. If this be the case, the proof that the author of the framework was also the compiler of the book becomes almost irresistible. For, as the framework constitutes the formal unity of the history, so the Deuteronomic passages impart to it a unity of spirit and purpose; and if both are contributed by the same writer we need not hesitate to speak of him as the real author of the Book of Kings.

It was remarked above (p. 6) that the author of Kings, whoever he might prove to be, belonged to the class of didactic historians. This estimate is now fully confirmed both by a survey of the contents of the book and by an examination of the Deuteronomic passages which we assign to the compiler. From the former we learn that he had little interest in political affairs as such —important reigns like those of Omri and Jeroboam II being dismissed with a few meagre notices, while events of an ecclesiastical character, such as the building or repair of the Temple, or the finding of the Law, are described at great length. Thus the mere selection of material, apart from his own comment and reflection, shows that the writer's dominant interest was religious. When we turn to the passages which form his individual contribution to the work we are enabled to define his position and purpose more exactly. The general principle which he desires to enforce is clearly expressed in such places as 1 K. ii. 2–4 (David's charge to Solomon), ix. 1–9 (God's second appearance to Solomon), 2 K. xvii. 7–23 (review of the history of the northern kingdom), &c. It is, in one word, the principle of retribution—the truth that fidelity to Yahweh is rewarded by national prosperity, and unfaithfulness punished by national misfortune. The standard of fidelity is, as we have seen, the Book of Deuteronomy; and the writer's purpose is to show how

the ideas inculcated in that book have been those which moulded the destinies of the nation throughout its past history. The Deuteronomic ideas most insisted on (besides the doctrine of retribution) are: (*a*) the exclusive right of Yahweh, based on His choice of Israel as His special possession, to the whole-hearted allegiance and worship of His people; (*b*) the necessity of maintaining that worship in its purity, uncontaminated by heathen elements, whether in the shape of material representations of Yahweh or the association of false gods with His service; (*c*) the restriction of sacrificial worship to the central sanctuary at Jerusalem. The Divine element in the history is symbolized by the three great theocratic institutions of the Temple, the Davidic dynasty, and Prophecy, each of which represents an aspect of Yahweh's gracious presence with Israel, and affords an external test of the people's attitude towards Him. In the neglect or abuse of these institutions the writer finds a measure of the nation's declension from the religious ideal by which alone its true welfare was secured.

From all this we see that the compiler is no mere religious antiquary, dwelling by preference on those matters in which he was specially interested, but writes with the serious moral purpose of impressing on his own generation, and those which might follow, the lessons which the national history was fitted to teach. It is not necessary to show in detail how the whole historical treatment is made subservient to the illustration of the principles that have just been stated; a few salient examples may suffice. The glories of Solomon's earlier reign are explained by the fact that he 'loved Yahweh, walking in the statutes of David' (1 K. iii. 3), who is always held up as the ideal of kingly virtue and piety. The misfortunes of his later years are attributed to his introduction of foreign cults in his old age (xi. 9 ff.); and here the compiler's didactic aim has led him to modify somewhat the representation of the older sources on which his narrative is based (see p. 174).

The secession of the northern tribes is the judgement on Solomon's apostasy (xi. 29 ff.); but at the same time it leads to a permanent contravention of the Deuteronomic standard in the establishment of the calf-worship, which is always emphasized as the principal cause of the ruin of the northern kingdom (2 K. xvii. 21–23). Of the later Israelite kings, some—like Ahab—sinned more heinously than Jeroboam, and are singled out for special reprobation (1 K. xvi. 31, xxi. 25 f.); and any striking exemplifications of the law of retribution in their case are carefully recorded (2 K. ix. 7 ff., 25 f., 36). In the quieter history of Judah the chief illustrations of the writer's religious principle are the sin of Manasseh, and the Deuteronomic reformation in the reign of Josiah. The former sealed the doom of Judah and rendered the destruction of the state inevitable (2 K. xxi. 10 ff., xxiii. 26 ff.); while the latter availed to delay the final catastrophe (xxii. 19 f.), and possibly in the view of the original editor (see below) had been the means of averting the judgement entirely and saving the existence of the nation.

We are not to suppose, however, that the compiler has yielded to the besetting temptation of the pragmatic historian, and sacrificed historical truth to the exigencies of a religious theory. There may be a few cases similar to that of Solomon mentioned above, where the material has been slightly readjusted in order more effectively to point the moral; but over against these we find many instances where facts are faithfully recorded, although they are at variance with a rigid application of the doctrine of retribution. The verdict of approval stands against the names of several kings whom either the disasters of their reign (Amaziah) or the circumstances of their death (Asa, Jehoash, Azariah, Josiah) must have seemed to mark out as objects of Divine displeasure; and conversely, the severe condemnation pronounced on Ahab has not led the compiler to suppress the testimony of older authorities to his great achievements or many noble traits in his

character. The truth is that the lessons which the writer seeks to inculcate are those naturally suggested by contemplation of the history as a whole, and could therefore be conveyed by a straightforward narration of the facts from which they are drawn. It is undoubtedly true that the compiler has rejected a great deal of valuable material because it was irrelevant to the didactic purpose of his work; but with regard to what he has retained, his procedure seems to be that of an honest, fairminded, and reliable historian.

IV. The Second Redaction and Date of the Book.

Thus far it has been convenient to speak of the compilation of Kings as a single operation, and of the editorial comments as if they had all been contributed by the same writer. As a matter of fact, the Deuteronomic sections are so far homogeneous that the general conclusions we have reached regarding the scope and character of the book will not be affected by any subsequent discovery of minor differences of standpoint which may be revealed by a closer inspection. The only question, indeed, which gives practical importance to these differences is the question whether the passages were written before or after the fall of the state. That the book was not finished till the latter part of the Exile is clear from the fact that the narrative is brought down to the release of Jehoiachin in the year 561; and the easiest supposition might seem to be that the compiler did not set to work till after that event. But against this we have to take note of certain indications that the main work of compilation was executed by a writer living before the Exile. Thus the hypothesis of a single redaction may prove to be insufficient; the pre-Exilic book will have been continued by an Exilic or post-Exilic editor; and the question will have to be considered whether this second editor merely added

a supplement at the end, or whether he undertook a more or less comprehensive revision of the work as a whole.

The most obvious trace of a pre-Exilic redaction lies perhaps in the use of the phrase 'unto this day,' with reference to conditions which no longer obtained after the downfall of the kingdom. The chief instances are 1 K. viii. 8, ix. 21, xii. 19; 2 K. viii. 22, xvi. 6; in all of which it will be seen that the phrase is either quite impossible or at least extremely unnatural in the mouth of a post-Exilic writer. It is true that in many cases the expression may reasonably be assigned to the older documents from which the compiler drew his information; and it has been suggested that he may have copied the words mechanically, heedless of the fact that they were no longer applicable to his own time. But since the phrase in any case presupposes a considerable interval between the events and the time of writing, since it is a characteristic phrase of the compiler (cf. 1 K. ix. 21, x. 12; 2 K. xvii. 23, 41), and since it often appears not (as in 2 K. x. 27) in long extracts from earlier authorities, but in brief extracts culled from official annals, the theory of editorial inadvertence is not very probable; and we are fairly entitled to assume that whether the compiler found the formula in his sources or not, he at least employed it intelligently and with deliberate reference to his own point of view.

But this evidence does not stand alone. When we turn to the Deuteronomic additions, which were certainly composed by the editor, we find further signs that some of them presuppose the continued existence of the Judaean state and monarchy. (1) In several passages the language seems to imply that the Davidic succession in Jerusalem had never been interrupted down to the time of writing (especially 1 K. xi. 36, xv. 4; 2 K. viii. 19). It is quite evident that in none of these places is the Exile contemplated, for the full promise is that the lamp of David's house is to burn continuously and continually in Jerusalem; and such language would be altogether unsuitable if the writer had

only in view the resuscitation of the monarchy after a long captivity. (2) Of a precisely similar character are some of the references to the Temple: it is spoken of as if it were still standing in the time of the Deuteronomic writer. Thus in 1 K. ix. 3 it is said that Yahweh has put His name there for ever, and that His eyes and His heart shall be there continually. Again, in Solomon's great intercessory prayer (1 K. viii. 14–53—a Deuteronomic composition) the leading idea is that the Temple will endure through all future generations as the pledge of Yahweh's presence; and while all sorts of calamities are anticipated as possible consequences of Israel's apostasy, the destruction of the Temple itself is nowhere hinted at. These two arguments have considerable force; but it must be admitted that there is one consideration which to some extent weakens them, and leaves the conclusion more or less doubtful. It might be urged that the passages in question, while undoubtedly written by the compiler, express a Divine purpose which was conditional on the fidelity of the kings and people, and that the purpose had been frustrated by persistent rebellion on the part of both. This point of view is unambiguously expressed in 1 K. ix. 1–9, where, alongside of a promise of the perpetuity of the Temple and the dynasty, there is a direct threat of exile and the overthrow of the sanctuary in the event of disobedience. For this reason it is difficult to say for certain whether the writer was living under the shadow of institutions whose ruin might yet be averted, or whether he was looking back on great hopes irretrievably shattered through long-continued violation of the conditions of Yahweh's favour. But even after allowance is made for that source of uncertainty there remains an impression that, if the Temple and the monarchy had actually ceased to be, the fact would have influenced the representation more decidedly than is the case in the passages considered. And that impression is strengthened by contrast with the terms in which the respite of the northern kingdom is spoken of in 2 K. xiii.

23: 'Yahweh was gracious unto them . . . because of His covenant . . . neither cast He them from His presence *as yet*.' (But see the note on the verse.)

On the other hand, there are Deuteronomic sections where the Exilic or post-Exilic point of view is revealed without ambiguity. The clearest examples are perhaps 2 K. xvii. 19f. (where the Exile is referred to as an accomplished fact), and xxi. 10–15, xxiii. 26f., xxiv. 2–4, 20 (where it is irrevocably decreed by Yahweh). Less decisive are 1 K. ix. 7–9; 2 K. xxii. 15–20. Now these are short passages; and it is not immediately apparent whether they point to a systematic revision of the book or are of the nature of isolated post-redactional insertions. But when the Deuteronomic sections are re-examined in the light supplied by the existence of undoubtedly post-Exilic elements, it is found that a number of passages can be more naturally assigned to this post-Exilic writer than to the pre-Exilic compiler of Kings [1]. It follows that the first of the two alternatives best expresses the true state of the case; the post-Exilic Deuteronomic additions are due to a *second editor*, who not only provided the conclusion of the narrative as it stands, but also contributed a good deal of the hortatory matter in which the book abounds [2].

The conclusions to which we are brought are therefore as follows. The hypothesis of a single (post-Exilic) compilation, though not absolutely inadmissible, is difficult to reconcile with the indications noted of a pre-Exilic point of view. It possesses undoubtedly this great attraction, that the fall of the state furnished a more natural opportunity and motive for a comprehensive treatment of the national history than any that can be suggested in the

[1] The discussion of the literary questions involved in this distinction is reserved for the Notes. In the Text the passages assigned to the younger editor, where it has been thought advisable to distinguish them, are marked by the letter D^2.

[2] It is commonly held that he likewise supplied the Synchronisms of the framework; but see below, p. 39.

period immediately preceding that catastrophe (König, *Einleitung*, p. 267 f.). But the literary evidence seems too strong to be overruled by that consideration; and the balance of probability is in favour of the view that the history was originally compiled before the Exile, but was afterwards supplemented and to some extent revised by a younger editor who lived during or after the Exile. The two redactors belonged to the same Deuteronomic school of historians, and are so much alike in their principles and their cast of thought that it is not always possible to assign an editorial insertion with confidence to the one rather than to the other.

To what point of the narrative the first compiler brought down his work cannot be definitely determined. A natural period for such a history to be written would be the latter part of the reign of Josiah, when the great reformation of religion might seem to have secured a return of temporal prosperity to the state; and an appropriate conclusion might be found in 2 K. xxiii. 25. But the last reference to the Chronicles of the kings of Judah (see p. 25) does not occur till xxiv. 5; and if that work which has been the compiler's principal authority for the southern history (see p. 23), was not finished till after the death of Jehoiakim, the compiler's own date must be still later. This brings us into the reign of Zedekiah; so that unless xxiv. 5 be the mistaken repetition of a stereotyped formula by a copyist, the book must have been written on the very eve of the final captivity, when all hope of a favourable turn in the fortunes of the nation must have passed away. The continuation of the framework in the appendix would not of itself present any difficulty, since the younger editor would naturally adopt the plan laid down by his predecessor.

The precise date of the second redactor is also uncertain but it can be pretty securely fixed within narrow limits. The superior limit is, of course, the liberation of Jehoiachin from his Babylonian prison in 561 (2 K. xxv. 27 ff.): the

language suggests further that his death had already taken place ('until the day of his death,' Jer. lii. 34). On the other hand, the prominence given to this incident seems to show that it was comparatively recent at the time of writing; and we may place the second redaction in the quarter of a century between 561 and the return from captivity (536).

V. The Sources.

1. *Proximate Sources.* That the Book of Kings is a compilation from written documents is virtually acknowledged in the habitual reference to certain authorities which we have seen to be an all but constant feature of the framework. It is true that these works are only referred to for information which the compiler has *not* included in his own history; but it will not be deemed an extravagant speculation if we assume that he was also indebted to them for some of the material which he did think worth preserving. It is therefore of some consequence to ascertain what the nature of these compositions may have been. They are only three in number: (1) The Book of the Acts of Solomon (1 K. xi. 41); (2) The Book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel (cited for all the reigns except Jehoram and Hoshea); and (3) The Book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah (for all except Ahaziah, Athaliah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah).

The Hebrew expression rendered 'Book of the Chronicles' (*sēpher dibrê hayyāmîm*, lit. 'book of the affairs of the days') is the technical term for official records which were kept in the state archives for the purpose of commemorating important political events (Esther ii. 23, vi. 1, x. 2; Neh. xii. 23; 1 Chron. xxvii. 24). Hence we may surmise that the Books of the Chronicles of Israel and Judah have something to do with the official annals of these two kingdoms[1]. That such annals were kept,

[1] The distinction drawn by Wellhausen and Kuenen between

there is every reason to believe: we read frequently (2 Sam. viii. 16, xx. 24; 1 K. iv. 3; 2 K. xviii. 18, 37; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8) of a minister called the *mazkîr* (lit. 'remembrancer'), whose duty it would naturally be to record public events affecting the policy of the state. And this view of the nature of the two documents is so far borne out by the few hints we get as to their contents. We see that they were mainly if not exclusively of a *political* character, containing much valuable information regarding the doings of the several kings[1]. This, indeed, appears to have been the chief difference between these older histories and our present Book of Kings, and at once suggests a reason why the compiler did not avail himself more freely of their material. The only question now is whether the compiler's references are to the royal annals themselves, or to histories of a more popular character based on the annals and incorporating much of their contents. To the former view there are two

'chronicles' and '*book of* chronicles'—as if the latter were a literary composition based on the official documents—appears to be fallacious. The word *sēpher* (book) is a regular component of the title of the annals themselves, as may be seen from the passages cited above. In 1 Chron. xxvii. 24, the text requires amendment.

[1] For example: 'all that he did,' 'all his might,' 'how he warred,' &c.; the conspiracies of Zimri and Shallum; the fortifications of Asa and Ahab; Ahab's ivory palace; Hezekiah's water-supply; &c., &c. The single exception to the political character of the references is the 'sin' of Manasseh (2 K. xxi. 17), and even that exception is more apparent than real. For although in a state document an act of the king would not be branded as a 'sin,' it might very well have been recorded there as an achievement to the king's credit; while the compiler's repugnance led him to stigmatize it briefly as a 'sin.' To the view here taken of the nature of these notices it has been objected that no king would be likely to describe himself as a conspirator in his official annals. But, as Cornill points out, the only conspiracies for which the Chronicles are cited as authorities are those of Zimri and Shallum, both of whom reigned a very short time, and would quite probably be referred to as conspirators in the annals of their successors.

objections. In the first place, the official annals were not public property, and therefore could not have been consulted by any reader desirous of further information. In the second place, while the compiler might conceivably have had access to the annals of Judah, he could not possibly have seen those of Israel, which must have perished long before his time. The books of Chronicles must, therefore, have been in circulation as independent works; and it is reasonable to suppose that they were not mere transcripts of the official records, but literary productions of a more general kind, though based on the information supplied by the annals[1].

The northern Chronicle must have covered the whole history of the kingdom of Ephraim, and probably contained in addition the account of its fall, and the repeopling of the land by Assyrian colonists (2 K. xvii. 24 ff.). The Judaean Chronicle came down to the death of Jehoiakim (p. 22); and, as we have seen, must have been composed before the Exile.

The Book of the Acts of Solomon differs somewhat in its title from the other two, and may have been a work of a different character. It is probable that like them it was based on the annals of the reign; but whether its subsequent expansion followed on similar lines it is impossible to say: it depends on how much of the present account of Solomon's reign was taken from this particular document. The criticism of that section of the history is so peculiar that further consideration of this point may be deferred to the Introductory Notes to 1 K. iii–xi (p. 81 f.).

It only remains to be said that these three documents

[1] On this view of the two books there seems no reason why they should not be regarded as the source of some narratives which, while too diffuse to have been taken straight from the annals, yet have the appearance of being based on official documents (2 K. xi, xii; xvi. 10 ff.; xxii, xxiii). It should be added that there is some evidence that the Chronicles themselves were composite works, in which different sources were amalgamated (see on 1 K. xi. 14 ff.; 2 K. xi).

are always referred to *as separate works*; and there are no good grounds for the opinion held by some that before the time of the compiler they had been united in a single pre-Deuteronomic Book of Kings.

2. *Primary Sources.* The historical matter of the Book of Kings (as distinguished from the editorial framework and commentary) is of two kinds: (1) brief and often fragmentary extracts from official annals; and (2) lengthy continuous narratives, sometimes full of picturesque detail, and displaying literary power of a high order. Of the first, nothing now remains to be said: we regard them as taken ultimately from the state records of the two monarchies, but immediately from one or other of the three historical works described in the last paragraph[1].

With respect to the longer narratives, there are one or two points to be noted. In the first place, their style and general character are such that in most cases they would have been out of place in a political chronicle, and therefore they cannot be reasonably assigned to any of the sources named by the compiler. In most, though not quite all, the religious interest predominates, and is exhibited chiefly in the prominence given to the activity of the *prophets*. In the second place, their literary features show that they were not written by the compiler himself, while the differences of style and standpoint prove them to have been produced by many different authors and under varied circumstances. In the third place, they are not unfrequently annotated by the compiler; hence they must have passed through his hands and been incorporated by him in the book. It is important also to observe the links of connexion between them and

[1] Those belonging to the reign of Solomon are denoted by the letter **A** (see p. 82); in the subsequent history they are marked **KI** and **KJ** respectively, without any attempt to discriminate between notices that may have stood in the original official sources and others which received their present form from the editors of the books of the Chronicles.

the annalistic passages—each tacitly presupposing the other in a way which makes it practically certain that it is the compiler himself who has blended the two disparate elements into one whole[1]. The conclusion to which all this leads is manifest. Just as the compiler has omitted much that he read in his proximate sources, because it did not further his religious aim, so he has enriched the history from a variety of independent documents; and he has been able to draw on these sources all the more freely that for the most part they represent a religious standpoint essentially akin to his own.

We now proceed to enumerate the most important and the most easily distinguishable of these independent sources.

C. The account of Solomon's accession in 1 K. i, ii, is taken from what may be described as a Court-memoir of the reign of David. It belongs to the same document as 2 Sam. ix–xx; and apparently forms the immediate continuation and conclusion of that graphic and well-informed narrative; see further, p. 57. There are some resemblances between its style and that of the story of the revolt in 1 K. xii, which seem to show that it was known to the writer of the latter passage; but in what precise relation the two stand to one another it is difficult to judge.

S. In the history of Solomon we find a few anecdotes illustrative of his wisdom and greatness which are certainly not annalistic, and whose origin cannot be definitely traced to any known source: viz. Solomon's dream at Gibeon (1 K. iii. 4–15); his famous Judgement (iii. 16–28); the visit of the Queen of Sheba (x. 1–10). There is, however, no serious difficulty in supposing that they were in the secondary source, the Book of the Acts of Solomon; and they have been marked accordingly. See p. 82.

[1] E.g. 1 K. xiv. 1 ff. is unintelligible apart from xii. 25 ff.; xvii. 1 presupposes xvi. 29 ff.; 2 K. ix rests on viii. 28; &c., &c. (Wellhausen, against Thenius).

T. The account of the building of the Temple and palace in 1 K. vi, vii, which is wedged into a mass of annalistic fragments, is commonly supposed to be drawn from a document preserved in the Temple archives (see p. 103). To the same source some would assign the later sections which we have marked J (see below).

N. For the history of the kingdom of Israel the compiler has used first of all a group of northern narratives, mainly of a political character: 1 K. xx, xxii. 1–38; 2 K. iii, vi. 24–vii. 20, ix, x; and next,

A series of biographies of the great northern prophets—

Ej. Elijah: 1 K. xvii–xix, xxi; 2 K. i. 2–17; and

Es. Elisha: 2 K. ii, iv. 1–vi. 23, viii. 1–15, xiii. 14–21.

It will be found that these groups overlap one another at several points; and their mutual affinities have perhaps not been quite satisfactorily made out as yet. The political series (**N**) is united by some striking literary resemblances; and hence Wellhausen and others suppose that the passages are all taken from a single historical work dealing with the important period from Ahab to Jehu. The prominence given to the prophets Micaiah and Elisha is, of course, not in itself an objection to this view; because their activity was in reality an influential factor in the political life of the time. The two latest commentators (Benzinger and Kittel), however, take a different view. While recognizing the essentially political and secular character of 1 K. xx, xxii, they regard the later passages (especially 2 K. iii and vi. 24 ff.) as really belonging to a life of Elisha. The occasional similarities in language to 1 K. xx, xxii they explain by conscious or unconscious imitation of the one author by the other; and it is pointed out that there are affinities hardly less striking with the undoubtedly prophetic narratives, **Ej.** and **Es**[1]. These latter groups are both of composite origin; and it is thought that 2 K. iii, vi. 24 ff. represent a particular stratum

[1] For details, see the Notes, pp. 244, 282 f., 305 f.

in the collection of Elisha-narratives—more political than the rest, but still belonging decidedly to the department of prophetic biography. It seems doubtful if either of these theories does justice by itself to all the facts of the case; and some more complicated hypothesis may have to be resorted to in order to harmonize the conflicting indications. It is certainly remarkable that the whole of both groups (1 K. xx, xxii not excepted) illustrate more or less distinctly the influence of the prophets in North Israel. In 1 K. xx, it is true, the prophets are anonymous; and the passages relating to them are generally regarded as patches on the original political narrative, added by the compiler. But it is quite as likely that they express the purpose of the independent document *before* it was incorporated in the Book of Kings; and in that case we should have to suppose that an originally political narrative had been utilized as the basis of a great work on northern prophecy. This would explain the dual character of 2 K. iii, vi. 24 ff., which may have been partly rewritten to form the political background of the ministry of Elisha, while at the same time their original affinities with 1 K. xx, xxii have been preserved. It is, further, not improbable that the strictly prophetic Elijah- and Elisha-narratives (**Ej.** and **Es.**) had been amalgamated with **N** into a comprehensive history of prophecy in the kingdom of Ephraim.

J. Coming now to the southern kingdom, we find four lengthy passages (2 K. xi, xii. 4 ff., xvi. 10–18, and xxii. 3–xxiii. 24) which seem to have a common origin; and which, as has been mentioned above, some critics assign to the Temple archives. We are disposed to think they are taken straight from the Book of the Chronicles of Judah (**KJ**); and have marked 2 K. xi accordingly. For the other three passages, whose origin may be more doubtful, the symbol **J** has been used.

I and **I²**. Finally, the account of Hezekiah's reign is amplified in 2 K. xviii. 17–xx. 19 by extracts from the biography of the prophet Isaiah, in which perhaps two

separate narratives had previously been combined (see p. 386 ff.).

These are the principal documents which the compiler had at his disposal in writing the history of the monarchy. We see how his use of them has been guided by his dominant religious purpose, which has led him to devote so much space to narratives of which the prophets or the Temple formed the central interest. We have next to consider what assurance we have that all these passages were actually inserted by the compiler, and not by some later editor or scribe. That subject has to be discussed in connexion with some facts which show that post-redactional additions do occur in our present Book of Kings; and to this question we now turn.

VI. Later Additions and Redactions.

The evidence thus far adduced goes to show that the Book of Kings existed substantially in its present form before the close of the Exile, and that the strictly historical material had been sifted and arranged by a pre-Exilic compiler. We have found no proof that the younger Deuteronomic editor had any fresh documents at his command, or that he has added new facts to the history covered by the work of his predecessor. For the interval between the two redactions he does appear to have availed himself to some extent of written sources (see p. 436); but for the rest his additions are confined to the didactic element of the book, and have all been freely composed by himself. But have we any certainty that the process of compilation and expansion was completely arrested about the end of the Exile, and that no important additions were made after the book left the hands of the second redactor? Is it not possible that not only interpolations, but even complete narratives of late date, may have been inserted by successive editors in the long

period between the original redactors and the time when the text received its final form?

The activity of late editors is often most easily recognized in short glosses or interpolations which they have introduced (frequently in the margin at first) for the purpose of explaining or modifying some statements which had become either unintelligible or incredible to the age in which they lived. The discussion of such matters belongs to the province of textual rather than of literary criticism; and it is unnecessary in this place to say more than that the presence of such interpolations is to be expected, and is abundantly proved. There is just one series of slight insertions of sufficient importance to be mentioned here, because it reveals a point of view different from that of the Deuteronomic compilers. The letter P is used in the text to denote what may be called Priestly glosses; i.e. glosses which show a familiarity with the Priestly Code of the Pentateuch, and represent a tendency to superimpose its characteristic phraseology on the more ancient narratives of the Book of Kings. That they are really later additions is further shown by the fact that a considerable proportion of them was wanting in the MSS. from which the Greek translation was made. It will be seen that glosses of this kind are few in number, and are practically confined to one section of the history. They occur most frequently in the account of the dedication of the Temple (1 K. viii. 1–11); there are one or two in the description of the Temple buildings (vi, vii); and perhaps a couple of isolated instances in the rest of the book (e.g. 1 K. xviii. 31 b). Now the extreme rarity of these priestly annotations is a very interesting fact, and a proof of the fidelity with which the characteristic features of the book have been preserved. What a systematic revision of the Book of Kings from the priestly standpoint would have meant we can partly judge from the parallel sections of the books of Chronicles, where the ancient history is largely recast in order to

bring it into conformity with the ideals which had long become traditional under the influence of the Priestly Code. The almost complete immunity of the Book of Kings from this method of treatment is a valuable testimony to the soundness of the historical tradition which it represents.

The question regarding the insertion of longer narrative passages is at once more difficult and more important. Strictly speaking, we can have no absolute assurance that any particular section stood in the original book, unless it bears traces of the compiler's pen, or else is presupposed by some other section which demonstrably passed through his hands. It must be admitted that the number of important passages which fail to satisfy this abstract test is not small. But on the other hand, the mere absence of editorial comment is plainly no proof that a passage was *not* placed by the compiler; and no sober critic would think of disputing its genuineness, except where it interrupts the connexion, or where its standpoint and language suggest a considerably later date. Thus, the incident of Naboth's vineyard in 1 K. xxi contains clear evidence of the compiler's activity, and must be unhesitatingly set down as belonging to one of his sources. The same cannot be said of Elijah's conflict with Jezebel and Ahab in 1 K. xvii–xix. But then the two narratives so closely resemble each other that no reason can be given for assigning their authorship to different periods; since one is certainly older than the compiler, the other must be presumed to be older likewise, and to have been incorporated by him in his work. By the application of that obvious principle of criticism, the great bulk of the documentary material is guaranteed beyond all reasonable doubt.

There remain, however, a few cases where at least the possibility of post-redactional insertion must be left an open question. A typical instance is the story of Jeroboam and the man of God from Judah in 1 K. xiii. We note in the

first place that this narrative seems to have been intruded into its position, and not without disturbing the continuity of the verses immediately preceding. It contains, moreover, features which in the judgement of some critics indicate a stage of theological reflection more advanced than the period preceding the Exile. Hence, in the entire absence of any sign, direct or indirect, that it passed under the eye of the compiler, the suggestion that it was inserted in a later age cannot be absolutely excluded. Some scholars, indeed, think the facts can be sufficiently explained by assigning the section to the younger (Exilic) redactor; but that view has little to recommend it. For, apart from the question whether the younger redactor used any additional documents at all, if the difference of standpoint be as great as is alleged, the interval of time between the two redactions seems too short to account for it. The same kind of considerations applies to some other passages, whose early date is open to question: they are those marked in the text by the letter **Z**.

VII. The Greek Version of Kings.

The translation of the O. T. from Hebrew into Greek was gradually accomplished at various times during the two and a half centuries preceding the Christian era. The middle portion of the Canon, to which the Book of Kings belongs, was probably in existence in its Greek garb about the middle of the second century B.C.[1]; so that from that time downwards we are sure that the transmission of the text ran in two parallel channels, although actual MS. evidence of the existence of either is not met with till a much later date.

The lay reader is apt to be surprised at the deference paid by modern commentators to this version, seeing it only purports to be a translation in another tongue of an

[1] See the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus, written by the Greek translator, *c.* 130 B.C.

original which we still have in our own hands. It may therefore be desirable to say a few words here in explanation of the importance for O. T. study of this translation, which is commonly known as the Septuagint (LXX), and which, it should be remembered, was the Bible chiefly used by the N. T. writers.

Every one understands the value for N. T. criticism of a comparison of various readings in different MSS. In the study of the O. T. this resource fails us, all existing Hebrew MSS. being practically identical, and none of them older than the ninth century A. D. This, of course, shows that extraordinary care was exercised in copying the text from that time onwards, and there is reason to believe that the same scrupulous fidelity was observed since the second or third century A. D., when it is supposed that a standard Hebrew text was adopted, to which all MSS. were conformed. We have no right to assume, however, that a similar uniformity prevailed before that date, or that the standard text ultimately agreed upon represents accurately the original autographs, or even the closest approximation to them that might have been obtained. Now, the chief value of the LXX is this, that very frequently it is a translation, not of the text which we read in our Hebrew Bibles, but of an independent and divergent text, which of course must have been that of some Hebrew MSS. at the time the translation was made. Though these MSS. have perished and have left no successors in Hebrew, the LXX affords positive proof of their existence; and they have to be reckoned with as independent witnesses to the condition of the text, say in the second century B. C., just as if they lay before us now. And whether they represented a superior or inferior form of the text is a question not to be settled off-hand by any *a priori* considerations, but to be decided on the merits of each particular case. If, for example, the LXX should suggest an emendation of the Hebrew, which renders intelligible what is otherwise obscure, there is a presumption that it

follows the reading of a better MS. than that followed in preparing the standard Hebrew text. Or if the LXX lacks a passage which looks like an interpolation in the Hebrew, it strengthens the probability that an insertion had really been made in the family of MSS. represented by the standard text, but not in those followed by the LXX. Or, once more, if the LXX should mention some incident not recorded in the Hebrew, which throws light on the general sequence of events, we may suppose that the LXX has preserved a genuine element of the historical tradition which the Hebrew has lost. Of course, all these hypothetical cases may be reversed, with the result of establishing the superiority of the Hebrew; but each instance has to be examined separately, without prejudice in favour of one version or the other.

Here another fact has to be noticed. From the time of Origen the text of the LXX has been subjected to repeated revisions; and the constant tendency of these revisions was to assimilate its text more and more closely to the Hebrew standard. New Greek translations, based on our present Hebrew, had come into existence; and when a reviser thought that his exemplar of the LXX deviated too far from the Hebrew, he was very apt to substitute the corresponding section of the more recent versions as being more faithful to the Hebrew verity. Hence, if of two Greek MSS. one gives a literal reproduction of the Hebrew as we have it, while the other markedly diverges from it, there is a very strong probability indeed that the latter will represent the original LXX and the former a later accommodation to the Hebrew. Or if, as frequently happens, a passage of the Hebrew is duplicated in the Greek, once in a literal rendering and again in a divergent form, we may again assume that the latter is the real text of the LXX, and therefore of the group of ancient MSS. on which that translation was based.

These are perhaps the elementary facts on which the critical use of the LXX proceeds; but the questions which

arise in practice are amongst the most difficult with which textual criticism has to deal. Unfortunately the study of the LXX text is not yet sufficiently advanced to permit of its being fully utilized as an instrument of critical investigation. Much remains to be done before the original translations are disentangled from the later accretions that have gathered round them; and the idiosyncrasies of the various Greek translators will have to be carefully marked before a confident judgement can be formed on the character of the Hebrew text which underlies their work. Still, even the helps already available, if used cautiously, are of priceless value to the expositor. For while no existing edition professes to give the LXX text in its original condition, there are some texts which can be pretty safely relied on as representing it very closely in particular instances. The edition of Swete reproduces the text of the famous Vatican MS. (referred to as LXX (B)), which, so far as the Book of Kings is concerned, is *relatively* free from the harmonizing alterations of the revised recensions; and that of Lagarde, giving the text of a family of MSS. supposed to represent the recension of Lucian of Antioch (LXX (L)), about the beginning of the fourth century A. D., also contains many independent readings which appear to be primitive. These, together with the so-called Hexaplar Syriac and the monumental work of Field[1], are perhaps the most useful aids in this branch of investigation; and by a judicious use of the material provided by them we undoubtedly obtain a great deal of light on points of exegesis and criticism which would otherwise be hopelessly obscure.

In order to convey some idea of the mutual relations of the Hebrew and Greek versions we here enumerate the more striking cases of variation:—In the second chapter

[1] *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt*, &c., vol. i, 1875. For information on all these matters the reader is referred to Swete's admirable *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, 1900.

of 1 Kings two long insertions occur in the LXX, one after verse 35 and the other at the end of the chapter. These have a certain critical interest, though it is difficult to believe that they are essentially anything better than a *réchauffé* of material which the Hebrew contains in other and more natural connexions (see p. 80 f.). In ch. iv, on the other hand, the arrangement of the LXX is distinctly superior to the Hebrew (see p. 94). The most perplexing of all the differences is the widely divergent account of the career of Jeroboam which the LXX inserts between verses 24 and 25 of ch. xii: along with this we have to take the account of the revolt, which corresponds in the main to the Hebrew (though the name of Jeroboam does not appear till verse 20), and also the omission of xiv. 1–20. It is very difficult to understand how such a narrative could have arisen out of the Hebrew account; but the discussion of the question must be reserved for an Appendix (Note II). A simpler case is the transposition of xx and xxi, so as to bring together the Elijah narratives on the one hand and the political narratives on the other in what many scholars regard as the true and original order (p. 254). Another kind of variation is seen in the fact that the reign of Jehoshaphat is inserted (in 1 K. xvi. 28^{a-h}) *before* instead of after that of Ahab. This is the result of a difference in chronology which makes Jehoshaphat accede to the throne in the eleventh year of Omri instead of the fourth of Ahab; and it illustrates at once the resolute consistency with which the editors carried out their principles, and the freedom with which they rearranged the material in accordance with them. And finally we may call attention to a series of discrepancies in the chronology, which cannot be explained by accidental errors in copying, but seem to imply two radically distinct chronological systems between which the allegiance of different editors had been divided. To this subject we shall return in the next section.

It does not appear that any single theory will apply to

all these variations; which, be it remembered, are not one tenth part of those that have to be dealt with in a minute study of the book. Some, no doubt, might be set down to the caprice or ignorance of the translators; but there are others which still await a satisfactory explanation. One is almost driven to regard them in the light of residual phenomena, which refuse to accommodate themselves to any hard and fast theory of the composition of the book. The one general conclusion to which they unambiguously point is that the text of Kings remained in a very fluid condition down to the second century B. C.: 'Neither the one version nor the other is the original; each represents a stage, and not always the same stage, in the long-protracted labours of the redactors[1].'

VIII. The Chronology.

The compiler of Kings would appear to have been one of the first O. T. writers to recognize the importance for the historian of a definite and systematic chronology. He has met this requirement by the elaborate series of notices contained in the Introductory Formulas of the framework; and if the figures should be found reliable, he has thus provided the materials for a perfect chronology of the period covered by his history. The tests to which every such system must be subjected are *first*, its self-consistency, and *second*, its agreement with independent trustworthy records, such, for example, as those supplied by the Assyrian monuments. Now, a very slight inspection of the system suffices to show that its data frequently contradict each other, so that it is quite impossible to accept its statements without criticism. On further examination, it appears that the results do not correspond with those derived from the Assyrian inscriptions; although it may be said at once that the errors of the Hebrew text appear to be much less extensive than

[1] Kuenen, *Onderzoek*, p. 428.

is often supposed. We are here confronted with problems of extreme intricacy, an exhaustive discussion of which is far beyond the scope of the present volume. It is necessary, nevertheless, that something should be said on the subject, partly for the sake of exhibiting the principles on which the chronological scheme of the book has been constructed, and partly with the aim of reducing the probabilities of error to their proper dimensions.

1. *The Chronological Scheme.* First of all, it is necessary to distinguish between the two elements which enter into the chronological statements of the framework: viz. first, the lengths of the reigns; and second (for the period of the divided monarchy), the synchronisms between the histories of Israel and Judah. The numerous discrepancies between these two sets of figures prove conclusively that they do not proceed from the same author, and that the synchronisms have been calculated from the durations of the reigns (not, of course, vice versa). The facts cannot be explained by the assumption of textual corruption, for it is usually found that a mistake once introduced is perpetuated, until it is neutralized by another. It is reasonable to suppose that the lengths of reign were taken from the Chronicles of Israel and Judah by the compiler, and therefore rested originally on good authority: whether they have been accurately transmitted is of course another question. The synchronisms are usually attributed to the younger redactor; but in view of the remarkable deviations found in the LXX (especially in LXX (L), see below) it seems more probable that they were inserted at a much later stage in the history of the text. For our immediate practical purposes, therefore, it might be safe to confine our attention to the durations of the reigns, neglecting the synchronisms except in so far as they help to locate an error in the other series, or throw light on the mode of reckoning there employed.

The next question, accordingly, is as to the manner in which the length of a reign was computed. Two methods

are possible: (*a*) The first (which is the one that commends itself to us as most natural and convenient) is to reckon by complete calendar years, so that if a king comes to the throne in the middle of a year that year will be given to his predecessor, while the ensuing year is counted as the first year of the new reign. On this principle the time occupied by a series of reigns will be obtained by simple addition of the separate durations. (*b*) But another method is conceivable. The year in which a change of reign occurs might be reckoned twice, once as the last year of the deceased king, and again as the first of his successor; so that to find the true period covered by a number of reigns we must deduct from the sum of the lengths one year for each reign. Benzinger has tried to prove that both methods were in use among Hebrew chronologers; and that while the latter (*b*) governs the chronology of the Hebrew text, the former (*a*) lay at the basis of the original LXX, and is represented by a striking but fragmentary series of notices preserved chiefly in LXX (L). The facts are perhaps not sufficiently numerous to allow a confident judgement on the latter point; although it will appear presently that Benzinger's theory gives significance to many interesting phenomena of the text of LXX (L). At all events, it is quite clear that (*b*) is the prevalent method of the Hebrew synchronisms. This is seen most evidently from such cases as Nadab, Elah, and Ahaziah (of Israel), each of whom reigned two years, while each reign terminated (according to the synchronisms) in the year immediately following that in which it began. At the same time, there are a good many exceptions—e. g. Abijam, Jehoash (of Judah), Pekah, &c.—in which (barring errors of text) the method (*a*) appears to be followed.

We may now proceed to illustrate these results from the chronological data of the book. For this purpose we divide the history into three periods, marked by the two absolutely fixed synchronisms between the histories of

Israel and Judah: viz. the deaths of Ahaziah of Judah and Jehoram of Israel on one day, and second, the fall of Samaria in the sixth year of Hezekiah of Judah.

In the first period—from the revolt of the ten tribes to the murder of Ahaziah and Jehoram by Jehu—there are six reigns in Judah and nine in Israel. Taking the lengths of the reigns as they stand in the Hebrew, the sum is, for Judah ninety-five years, and for Israel ninety-eight years. If, now, in accordance with the method (*b*), we subtract a year for each reign, we find that each series runs to eighty-nine years. So close a correspondence cannot be accidental; and the result confirms the hypothesis that (*b*) is actually the system on which the Hebrew computation is based. The method (*a*) yields an inequality of three years; and possibly this is the explanation of the fact that Abijam receives six years in the LXX as against the three years of the Hebrew; though it might still be made a question whether the reign was lengthened in the LXX or shortened in the Hebrew. At any rate, the six years of the LXX brings the Judaean series up to ninety-eight years, in harmony with the Israelitish series. The synchronisms of the period present many anomalies in both versions; but in the Hebrew the method (*b*) obtains on the whole, while the LXX has some striking examples of (*a*). One of the most singular is the case of Asa, who is said to have ascended the throne in the twenty-fourth year of Jeroboam (1 K. xv. 9, LXX); although the Hebrew allows only a twenty-two years' reign to the latter monarch (xiv. 20). This is a passage which was not found in the original LXX; so it is just possible that some MSS. assigned him a twenty-five years' reign; and in this way the advantage of giving six years to Abijam would be neutralized. But these perplexing inquiries cannot be further pursued here[1].

[1] It may also be noted that in a passage peculiar to the LXX (xii. 24[a]) the Vatican MS. gives only twelve years to the reign of Rehoboam.

It is in the middle period—from the revolution of Jehu to the fall of Samaria—that errors are most serious and most embarrassing. The sum of the Israelitish reigns is here 144, that of the Judaean 165 years; if we follow the method (*b*) the numbers are 135 and 158 respectively. With such a discrepancy correct synchronisms are impossible; and there are two which at once arrest attention by their glaring inconsistency: those, namely, of Azariah of Judah (2 K. xv. 1) and Zechariah of Israel (xv. 8). The former is eleven years, and the latter twelve years, too late; but as they occur in opposite series the effect is cumulative; and they reveal a total disparity of twenty-three years, which is just the amount of error we are looking for. But it is very difficult to conceive how the mistake could have originated. The latter synchronism obviously requires either that the reign of Amaziah (of Judah) be shortened, or that of Jeroboam II lengthened, by eleven years[1]. Let us try the first alternative, which is the less objectionable of the two. In this case Azariah came to the throne in the fourth of Jeroboam II; and the sum of the Judaean reigns is reduced to 147 years (on the method (*b*)). This still leaves twelve years to be accounted for; but the synchronisms yield us no further guidance. A suggestion of Benzinger's may be helpful. He thinks that in the original scheme of the Hebrew the fall of Samaria was made to synchronize, not with the sixth of Hezekiah, but with the latter part of the reign of Ahaz (see below). If this view be accepted we possibly do not need to go any further: we seem to have come on a stage of the redaction in which the event coincided with the ninth year of Ahaz[2]. The editors of the Greek text of

[1] Compare 2 K. xiv. 23, xiv. 2, xv. 1, 8. For if 15th Amaziah = 1st Jeroboam, then 1st Azariah (= 29th Amaziah) = 15th Jeroboam; and 38th Azariah = 52nd Jeroboam. To reconcile xv. 8 with the forty-one years' reign of Jeroboam we should have to antedate the reign of Azariah by eleven years, i. e. to curtail the reign of his father by that amount.

[2] On the possibility of an overlapping of the reigns of

LXX (L) appear to have dealt with the problem on lines peculiar to themselves. Jehu is there said to have begun to reign in the second year of Athaliah, thus making an interregnum of one or two years in the history of Israel; and the reign of Pekahiah is extended from two years to ten. This brings the Israelitish series (on the method (*a*)) up to 153 or 154 years. If now we assume as before that the reign of Amaziah has to be shortened by eleven years, the difference entirely vanishes; and the last year of Hoshea coincides with the sixth of Hezekiah. Unfortunately, the synchronisms proper to this system have been displaced in favour of those in our Hebrew text; so that we have no means of checking the results.

In the third period—from the fall of the northern to that of the southern kingdom—there are no synchronisms to assist or perplex the calculations; and all that has to be done for the chronology is to compare it with the data derived from the Assyrian and Babylonian records.

2. *Absolute Chronology.* Thus far we have been considering only the internal self-consistency of the scheme as it must be supposed to have passed through the hands of the synchronists at a certain stage of the redaction. We must now go on to compare the figures with the chronological data supplied by the Assyrian monuments. Here we naturally begin with the *third* period, which is bounded by two well-ascertained dates—the fall of Samaria in 722 and the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B. C. Now, the sum of the reigns from the accession of Hezekiah to the end of Zedekiah is, on the reckoning (*a*), 140 years; on the reckoning (*b*), 133 years. Hence the accession of Hezekiah would be on the one reckoning 727 B. C., and on the other 720 B. C. The first result agrees with the statement of 2 K. xviii. 10 that Samaria fell in

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Azariah and Jotham, see below, p. 45. We cannot take account of it here, because it is not contemplated in the synchronistic scheme. On an ingenious attempt by Rühl to solve the difficulty, see Appendix, Note III.

the sixth year of Hezekiah; and it is quite likely that that synchronism is based on this very calculation. But singularly enough, the other result agrees with a view maintained on independent grounds by Winckler, and adopted by several recent scholars, viz. that the destruction of Samaria took place towards the end of the reign of Ahaz, and that Hezekiah's reign actually commenced in 720. Which view is correct it might be difficult to say; but there is no doubt that the second involves least disturbance of the traditional data of the Hebrew text. We shall see immediately that the shorter computation on which it rests, gives the most satisfactory results for the earlier periods of the history, and is therefore to be preferred. Moreover, the date 720 for the accession of Hezekiah is alone consistent with the traditional ascription of a sixteen years' reign to Ahaz: if we were to accept the date 727 it would be necessary to shorten the reign of Ahaz to about eight years. Accordingly, we shall adopt henceforth the shorter Hebrew method of reckoning (*b*); and fix the accession of Hezekiah in 720 B. C.

Proceeding backwards, we pause first at the year 733, the date of Tiglath-pileser's expedition against Pekah (see Notes, p. 364); which must have taken place near the beginning of the reign of Ahaz and near the end of that of Pekah. Let us put it tentatively in the third of Ahaz and the last but one of Pekah. This puts the accession of Ahaz in 735, which harmonizes with 2 K. xvi 2, where Ahaz is said to have reigned sixteen years. But it puts back the death of Pekah to 732; and so makes it necessary to assign to Hoshea a reign of eleven years instead of nine (2 K. xvii. 1: see further, p. 374). We have now obtained a new point of departure, which to some extent neutralizes the uncertainty as to the accession of Hezekiah; but the next step backwards reveals a more serious error in the Israelitish reigns. In 738 Menahem paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser (see p. 362); so that in the six years from 738–732 we have to find room for

part of the reign of Menahem and the whole of those of Pekahiah (two years) and Pekah (twenty years). There is therefore an excess of more than fourteen years, which will be most simply adjusted by reducing the reign of Pekah to four years (Hebrew computation). An interval of 104 years lies between this and the next earlier Assyrian synchronism, which is Jehu's tribute to Shalmaneser in 842 (see p. 335). For reasons which will presently appear, it is necessary to put the incident very near the beginning of Jehu's reign: let us assume for convenience of calculation that he came to the throne in 843. The reigns from Jehu to Shallum cover ninety-eight years. This allows seven years for the part of Menahem's reign preceding 738—a perfectly satisfactory result. It follows, therefore, that the traditional durations of the reigns from Jehu to Menahem are at least approximately correct.

Passing to the Judaean series, we have no Assyrian synchronism between 733 and 842 [1]. Putting, as before, the accession of Athaliah in 843, we should have between this and the accession of Ahaz a period of 108 years, for which we have lengths of reign amounting to 139 years [2], a discrepancy of thirty-one years. We have no means of tracking this error to its source; but the system which requires least alteration of the numbers in the Massoretic text is perhaps that of P. Rost, in *KAT*[3], p. 319 ff. Rost divides the error into two parts, thus: (1) He reduces the reign of Amaziah from twenty-nine years (2 K. xiv. 2) to nine. (2) He supposes that the greater part of the reign of Jotham was a regency during his father's lifetime (2 K. xv. 5), and that he ruled independently for only five years (Hebrew reckoning) [3]. With these assumptions we obtain

[1] The supposed mention of Azariah by Tiglath-pileser in 738 is now generally allowed to be a mistaken identification; see p. 359.

[2] On the assumption (justified by 2 K. xi. 4) that Athaliah reigned six *full* years.

[3] To be strictly accurate, Rost's theory is that the sixteen

a perfect correspondence between the biblical data and those of the Assyrian inscriptions. And it will be found that the scheme fully satisfies the condition that the reigns of Amaziah of Judah and Jehoash of Israel must have been contemporaneous (xiv. 8 f.).

In the first period—from the rebellion of the ten tribes to the revolution of Jehu—there is but one date fixed by Assyriology, the battle of Ḳarḳar, in which Ahab fought, in 854. This must have been near the end of Ahab's reign; but it requires very close calculation indeed to find time for the subsequent reigns of Ahaziah and Jehoram, without reducing the numbers of the Hebrew text. Rost accomplishes it, however, in the following manner: he supposes the battle of Ḳarḳar to have been fought in the spring of 854, and the battle of Ramoth-gilead before the autumn of the same year. It is thus just possible to fit in the twelve years of Ahaziah and Jehoram before 843[1]. For the remainder of the period we have no means of strictly controlling the dates. The invasion of Shishak would yield a synchronism with Egyptian history; and the relations of Solomon and Omri to the contemporary kings of Tyre furnish points of contact with the Tyrian annals; but the chronology of these countries is too uncertain to be of much service in

years assigned to Jotham (2 K. xv. 33) were wholly contemporaneous with Azariah, but that his total reign was twenty years (see xv. 30). The argument here is rather precarious; but the important point is that the reigns of Jotham and Azariah may be quite naturally supposed to have overlapped for an indeterminate period.

[1] See Table III. Here (following Rost) the year of Ahab's death and Ahaziah's accession is given as 855 B.C. The explanation of this apparent contradiction is that the Hebrew year was reckoned from the autumn, while the Babylonian was reckoned from the spring. The year of Ahab's death ran from the autumn of 855 to the autumn of 854: whether we call it 855 or 854 is merely a question of names. The essential point in the calculation is that the death of Ahab and the battle of Ḳarḳar must fall within the same *Hebrew* year.

checking the figures of the framework of Kings. With regard to the latter, however, it may be mentioned that Winckler's investigation (based on extracts from the official annals preserved by Menander of Ephesus) yields results in perfect agreement with the Hebrew chronology. He puts the reign of Hiram I about 968–935 B. C., and Ittobaal I (Ethbaal) is exactly contemporary with Omri of Israel (887–876) [1].

On the whole, then, it may be said that the examination is surprisingly favourable, so far as the durations of the reigns are concerned, to the soundness of the Hebrew tradition. The details are given in the accompanying Chronological Table (III), which is drawn almost entirely from the work of Rost referred to above.

[1] See *KAT*[3], p. 129.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES

N.B. – Tables I and II give the lengths of reign and synchronisms according to the Hebrew Text and the LXX respectively. The figures in heavy type are those common to the two versions; those peculiar to the Hebrew are in plain type; those peculiar to the LXX in italics.

Table III ignores the synchronisms, and gives (1) the years B. C. of the various reigns according to the amended Hebrew text (after Rost), and (2) the dates fixed by Assyrian inscriptions.

TABLE I.

SYNCHRONISMS, ETC., OF THE HEBREW TEXT.

Length of Reign.			Year of Accession in contemp. Reign—	
Judah.	Israel.		Of Israel.	Of Judah.
17		Rehoboam		
	22	Jeroboam		
3		Abijam	18th	
41		Asa	20th	
	2	Nadab		2nd
	24	Baasha		3rd
	2	Elah		26th
	7 days	Zimri		27th
	12	Omri		31st
	22	Ahab		38th
25		Jehoshaphat	4th	
	2	Ahaziah		17th
	12	Jehoram		18th
8		Jehoram	5th	
1		Ahaziah	12th	
95	98			
6		Athaliah		
	28	Jehu		
40		Jehoash	7th	
	17	Jehoahaz		23rd
	16	Jehoash		37th
29		Amaziah	2nd	
	41	Jeroboam II		15th
52		Azariah	27th	
	6 mo.	Zechariah		38th
	1 mo.	Shallum		39th
	10	Menahem		39th
	2	Pekahiah		50th
	20	Pekah		52nd
16		Jotham	2nd	
16		Ahaz	17th	
	9	Hoshea		12th
6		Hezekiah	3rd	
165	144	**Fall of Samaria.**		

TABLE II.

SYNCHRONISMS, ETC., ACCORDING TO LXX.

Length of Reign.			Year of Accession in contemp. Reign—	
Judah.	Israel.		Of Israel.	Of Judah.
17[1]		Rehoboam		
	22?[2]	Jeroboam		
6		Abijam	18th	
41		Asa	*24th*	
	2	Nadab		2nd
	24	Baasha		3rd
	2	Elah		*20th*
	7 days[3]	Zimri		*22nd*[4]
	12	Omri.		31st
25		Jehoshaphat . . .	*11th*	
	22	Ahab.		*2nd*
	2	Ahaziah.		*24th*[5]
8[6]		Jehoram.	5th	
	12	Jehoram . . .		*2nd*[7]
1		Ahaziah	*11th*[5]	
98	98			
6		Athaliah		
	2	*Interregnum*[8]		
	28	Jehu		*2nd*[8]
40		Jehoash	7th	
	17	Jehoahaz . . .		23rd
	16	Jehoash		37th
29		Amaziah.	2nd	
	41	Jeroboam II . .		15th
52		Azariah	27th	
	6 mo.	Zechariah . . .		38th
	1 mo.[9]	Shallum		39th
	10	Menahem . . .		39th
	10[5]	Pekahiah . . .		50th
	20	Pekah		52nd
16		Jotham	2nd	
16		Ahaz	17th	
	9	Hoshea		12th
6		Hezekiah	3rd	
165	154	**Fall of Samaria.**		

[1] B (in xii. 24*a*) gives 12 years. [2] Not in original LXX. [3] B has *7 years*. [4] Luc. only: B omits. [5] Luc. only: B agrees with Heb. [6] So Luc.: B has 40! [7] Luc. (cf. 2 K. i. 17, Heb.): B has 18th. [8] Luc. only. [9] B omits.

TABLE III.

Chronology of the Kings of Judah and Israel, with Assyrian and Babylonian Synchronisms.

Year of Accession, B.C.		Length of Reign.	Monuments.	B.C.
971	Solomon	40		
932	Rehoboam.	17		
932	Jeroboam I . . .	*21*		
916	Abijam	3		
914	Asa	41		
912	Nadab	2		
911	Baasha	24		
888	Elah.	2		
887	Zimri, Omri . . .	12		
876	Ahab	22		
874	Jehoshaphat	25		
855	Ahaziah	2	Battle of Ḳarḳar[1] . . .	854
854	Jehoram	12		
850	Jehoram	8		
843	Ahaziah.	1		
843	Jehu.	28	Jehu's tribute to Assyria[2].	842
843	Athaliah	*7*[3]		
837	Jehoash.	40		
816	Jehoahaz	17		
800	Jehoash	16		
798	Amaziah	*9*[4]		
790	Azariah.	52		
785	Jeroboam II . . .	41		
749	Jotham (with Azariah)	*11*[5]		
745	Zechariah, Shallum	7 mo.		
745	Menahem	10		
739	Jotham (alone) . . .	*5*[5]	Menahem pays tribute[6]	738
736	Pekahiah	2		
735	Ahaz	16		
735	Pekah	*4*[7]	Galilee depopulated by Tiglath-pileser[8]. . .	733
732	Hoshea.	*11*[9]	Assyrians capture Damascus[10]	732
			Fall of Samaria[11] . . .	722
720	Hezekiah	29	Sennacherib's Invasion[12].	701
692	Manasseh	55		
638	Amon	2		
637	Josiah	31		
607	Jehoahaz	3 mo.		
607	Jehoiakim.	11	Battle of Carchemish[13] .	605
597	Jehoiachin.	3 mo.		
597	Zedekiah	11		
			Fall of Jerusalem[14] . .	587

NB. Italic figures are used to mark lengths of reign which have been altered from the Hebrew.

[1] See p. 243 f. [2] p. 45. [3] pp. 45, 347; cf. 2 K. xi. 3, 4. [4] p. 45.
[5] pp. 45, 360. [6] pp. 44, 362. [7] pp. 45, 365. [8] p. 364. [9] pp. 44, 373 f.
[10] p. 369. [11] pp. 43, 372. [12] p. 385 f. [13] p. 427. [14] pp. 430, 433.

NOTATION OF SOURCES

A. Extracts from the Annals of the reign of Solomon (in 1 K. iii–x). See page 81 f.

C. Court history of David—the main source of 1 K. i, ii. Page 57.

D. Passages assigned to the Deuteronomic Compiler of Kings (including the 'Framework'). Pages 12, 14.

D². Passages assigned to the second Deuteronomic Editor. Page 21.

Ej. Passages from the Biography of Elijah (in 1 K. xvii ff.). Page 28.

Es. Passages from the Biography of Elisha (in 2 K. ii ff.). Page 28.

I. & I². Passages from the Biography of Isaiah (in 2 K. xviii–xx). Page 29.

J. Judaean Narratives (in 2 K. xii, xvi, xxii f.). Page 29.

KI. Excerpts from the 'Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.' Pages 23, 26.

KJ. Excerpts from the 'Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah.' Pages 23, 26.

N. Northern Narratives, for the period from Ahab to Jehu (1 K. xx, &c.). Page 28.

P. Glosses of an Editor occupying the standpoint of the Priestly Code. Page 31.

S. Extracts from the 'Book of the Acts of Solomon' (in 1 K. iii–xi). Page 82.

T. Account of the Temple and Palace Buildings (1 K. vi, vii). Pages 82, 103.

Z. Post-Redactional Additions and Interpolations. Page 30 ff.

? Passages of uncertain Character or Origin.

LIST OF WORKS MOST FREQUENTLY REFERRED TO, WITH ABBREVIATIONS.

LXX. The Greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint). See p. 33 ff.

LXX (B). Swete's edition of the same (1887), reproducing the Text of the Vatican MS. (B).

LXX (L). Lagarde's edition—*Librorum Veteris Testamenti Canonicorum Pars Prior Graece* (1883)—giving the supposed text of the Recension of Lucian. See p. 36.

JOSEPHUS[1], *Ant.* : Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities.*
Bell. Jud. : ,, *On the Jewish War.*
cont. Ap. : ,, *Against Apion.*

THENIUS, O., *Die Bücher der Könige erklärt*, 2nd ed. (1873).

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FARRAR, F. W., *The First (Second) Book of Kings* (Expositor's Bible) (1883-94).

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[1] References are to Niese's edition (1887-95).

BENZINGER, I., *Hebräische Archäologie* (1894).

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BUHL, F., *Geographie des alten Palästina* (1896).

HILPRECHT, H. V., *Explorations in Bible Lands during the Nineteenth Century* (1903).

*OTJC*². SMITH, W. R., *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, 2nd ed. (1892).

,, *The Prophets of Israel*, 2nd ed. (1895).

,, *The Religion of the Semites*, 2nd ed. (1894).

KIB. SCHRADER, E., *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek* (1889-).

COT. *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament.* Translation by O. C. Whitehouse of the 2nd ed. of E. SCHRADER'S *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament* (1883). The references are to the pages of the German edition, which are numbered on the margin of the English.

*KAT*³. 3rd German edition of the same work, by H. Zimmern and H. Winckler (1902-3).

CIS. *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum.*

ZA. *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie.*

ZATW. *Zeitschrift für Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.*

DB. *Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by J. HASTINGS, D.D.

EB. *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, edited by T. K. CHEYNE, D.D., and J. S. BLACK, LL.D.

THE BOOK OF THE KINGS

REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

THE
FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS

[C] Now king David was old and stricken in years; **1**

i, ii. The Accession of Solomon.

According to the present arrangement of the text these two chapters form an appropriate introduction to the account of Solomon's reign in chs. iii–xi; and this was certainly the intention of the editor who separated the books of Samuel and Kings[1]. In its original context, however, the narrative belonged to the history of David rather than to that of Solomon. It continues the long account of David's court affairs which we find in 2 Sam. ix–xx; and in the primary document from which it was taken it must have been the immediate sequel of these chapters. That document is amongst the best specimens of Hebrew historical writing which we possess. It is evidently written from first-hand information about the course of events, and with intimate knowledge of the manners and inner life of the court. The narrative is full of life and colour, the style is graphic and lucid, the obscurity in which some important points are involved being due to the author's familiarity with scenes and conditions which are imperfectly understood by us. The writer's treatment of his subject is marked by singular impartiality and independence; he allows facts to speak for themselves; and it is only by reading between the lines, and imputing to him a subtlety of which he was probably innocent, that modern commentators fancy they can discover indications of his own personal bias. The passage falls naturally into three main divisions: (1) ch. i; (2) ch. ii. 1–12; and (3) ch. ii. 13–46.

(1) i. *The Contest for the Succession.*

In order to understand the situation we must bear in mind that the succession to the crown was as yet unregulated either by principle or precedent. There were perhaps three views current. (1) The idea that the monarchy was *elective*. Saul and David had both been elected by representatives of the people, and although this idea nowhere appears in the narrative before us it had not fallen altogether into desuetude; for on the death of Solomon an

[1] See Introd. p. 4. In Lagarde's edition of the Lucianic recension of the LXX the third book of 'Kingdoms' commences at ii. 12 of the Hebrew (and English) text.

and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat.
2 Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her stand before the king, and cherish him; and let her lie

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attempt was again made by the northern tribes to assert the principle of an elective monarchy. (2) The law of *primogeniture*, firmly established in Hebrew jurisprudence, created a strong presumption in favour of the oldest son of the previous king (as we see from the case of Jonathan). (3) At the same time the king's right to *nominate* his successor was generally recognized (i. 20, 27). The confusions here described arose from the conflict of the second and third of these principles. As the oldest surviving son of David, Adonijah naturally looked on himself as the heir to the throne, and was accepted as such by the people (ii. 15). On the other hand, David had determined that Solomon should succeed him; although a promise to that effect is nowhere recorded, and apparently no steps had been taken to make it public.—That is the *prima facie* sense of the narrative; and it may fairly claim to be the view which the historian intended to present, and which he himself honestly held. It is maintained, indeed, by some eminent critics that the author favoured the cause of Adonijah, believing Solomon's pretensions to be absolutely unfounded; and that he reveals the true state of the case by letting it appear that the alleged promise to Bath-sheba was an invention of Solomon's partisans imposed on the enfeebled memory of the king. For reasons stated below, that theory is here rejected as inherently improbable and inconsistent with the straightforward simplicity of the narration.

i. 1–4. *David's decrepit old age.* The narrative of 2 Sam. xx is here resumed after an interval of perhaps a few years. The verses contain a short description, necessary to the understanding of what follows, of the state of matters at David's court during the last months of his life. The sudden collapse of the king's strength is represented as due to senile decay. His actual age appears from ch. ii. 11, 2 Sam. v. 4 f. to have been only a little over seventy years. There is nothing very extraordinary in a failure of bodily vigour at that time of life; and certainly no need for the odious explanations sometimes put forward to account for it. The subsequent narrative nowhere implies that the king's *mental* powers were enfeebled.

1. old and stricken in years: 'an old man advanced in years' (*lit.* 'days'). For the expression cf. Gen. xviii. 11, xxiv. 1; Joshua xiii. 1, xxiii. 1, 2.

2. On the 'primitive and not ineffectual remedy' here proposed

in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat. So 3
they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of
Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought
her to the king. And the damsel was very fair; and she 4
cherished the king, and ministered to him; but the king
knew her not. Then Adonijah the son of Haggith 5
exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared

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the reader may consult the references in Farrar, *Books of Kings*, i. p. 62.

3. Abishag the Shunammite: a native of Shunem, the modern village of *Solam*, about five miles north of Jezreel, situated on a hill-slope looking south-west over the valley of Esdraelon. It has been imagined that Abishag's beauty became traditional, and suggested long afterwards the title 'Shulammite' for the heroine of the Song of Solomon (Cant. vi. 13).

4. the king knew her not. The clause is commonly supposed to refer to Adonijah's later desire to possess Abishag, and to have been written to clear him in advance of the suspicion of thereby aiming at the throne (see on ii. 17). It is doubtful if the words could cover any such motive.

i. 5–8. *Adonijah's pretensions to the crown.* Adonijah was the fourth of David's sons, born in Hebron (2 Sam. iii. 4; 1 Chron. iii. 2), and therefore at this time about thirty-five years of age. After the deaths of Amnon and Absalom, he was the oldest survivor of the royal family, the second son, Chileab (2 Sam. iii. 3, or Daniel, 1 Chron. iii. 1), having apparently died young. Of his mother Haggith nothing is known. Resolved to keep his claims well in the eye of the public, the prince follows the example of Absalom in the assumption of semi-royal state. He forms a party in the court, his chief supporters being Joab, the commander-in-chief, and Abiathar the priest—two of David's most loyal followers. On what grounds these men supported Adonijah we cannot conjecture; they may have honestly believed that he was the fittest candidate, and that they were acting in the true interests of the dynasty. They knew at all events that there was a party opposed to Adonijah, from whose leaders they carefully concealed their plans.

5. exalted himself . . . king: or, perhaps, 'was puffing himself up with the notion that he was to be king.' The form of expression in the original does not suggest a sudden resolve on Adonijah's part to seize the throne prematurely, but rather a fixed idea in his mind that the succession was legitimately his (ii. 15). Nothing more than this is involved in the procuring of **chariots**

him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before
6 him. And his father had not displeased him at any
time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he was also
a very goodly man; and he was born after Absalom.
7 And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and
with Abiathar the priest: and they following Adonijah
8 helped him. But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the
son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei,
and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged to David,
9 were not with Adonijah. And Adonijah slew sheep and

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and horsemen, &c.; it is of a piece with the conduct which David had tolerated for four years in the case of Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 1, 7).

to run before him: 'runners,' i. e. footguards.

6. had not displeased (or *pained*) **him** (**all his life**, marg.): had allowed him to do as he pleased. LXX inserts a similar remark about the training of Amnon in 2 Sam. xiii. 21.

and he was also: better, 'and he also was'—like Absalom (2 Sam. xiv. 25). The verse thus gives three explanations of the presumptuous behaviour of Adonijah—the foolish indulgence of his father, his handsome figure, and his seniority.

8. Zadok, colleague and rival of Abiathar in the priesthood, is first mentioned in 2 Sam. viii. 17, then in xv. 24 ff., as custodian of the ark; **Benaiah** was commander of the household troops (2 Sam. viii. 18); while **Nathan** is the well-known prophet. Of **Shimei, and Rei**, nothing is known; the text is very uncertain.

the mighty men: Heb. *Gibbôrîm* (heroes). These were probably David's old comrades in arms (see 2 Sam. xxiii. 8 ff.), who formed a sort of bodyguard, and naturally had a position of influence in the court. That they were identical with the Krethi and Plethi (see on verse 38), as is thought by some, is a view for which little evidence can be adduced.

i. 9, 10. *The proclamation of Adonijah.* The outcome of the conferences with Joab and Abiathar seems to have been a project to precipitate matters by at once proclaiming Adonijah king. The sacrificial feast described in the verses can hardly have any other meaning than this: it is so represented by Nathan, not only in his interview with the king (verse 25), but also in his conversation with Bath-sheba (verse 11); and there are no sufficient grounds for the suspicion that he wilfully exaggerated the significance of the incident. The feast took place at some ancient sanctuary of

oxen and fatlings by the stone of Zoheleth, which is beside En-rogel; and he called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants: but Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty 10 men, and Solomon his brother, he called not. Then 11 Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon,

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Jerusalem (W. R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*[2] p. 172, *n.* 3), where there was a sacred stone (Zoheleth) and a sacred well (En-rogel).

9. En-rogel has been usually identified with the so-called Well of Job (*Bîr-'Eyyûb*), south of the city, at the junction of the Kidron and Hinnom valleys. A good many recent writers (following Clermont-Ganneau) take **the stone of Zoheleth** (i. e. the Serpent's stone) to be the modern *ez-Zehweleh*, a rock-hewn stair in the face of the Mount of Olives, right opposite and quite near to the Virgin's Spring (see on verse 33); in which case En-rogel must be the Virgin's Spring itself. But it is plain from this chapter that if En-rogel be the Virgin's Spring, Gihon must be sought elsewhere; and the identification of Gihon with the Virgin's Spring rests on stronger grounds than that of Zoheleth with ez-Zehweleh. There remains of course the possibility that in the environs of ancient Jerusalem there may have been other springs which are now dried up.

all the men of Judah, &c. It is a curious fact that both Absalom and Adonijah seem to have relied most on David's own tribesmen for support to their treasonable designs.

i. 11-14. *The counterplot in favour of Solomon.* The moving spirit is Nathan, who had been David's prophetic adviser from an early period of his reign in Jerusalem (2 Sam. vii), and through whom the name Jedidiah is said in 2 Sam. xii. 25 to have been conferred on Solomon. The traditional view that he had superintended the education of Solomon rests on a misinterpretation of that verse, as if it read, 'he (David) gave him into the hand of Nathan.' Partiality for a favourite pupil cannot, therefore, have been the motive of Nathan's action; the simplest explanation is probably the best, viz. that he was aware of David's decision in favour of Solomon and approved of it. It is true that there is no record of such a decision in the previous history; and the question is much discussed whether it be not a pure invention which Nathan and Bath-sheba succeeded in palming off on the credulity of the king. That theory is no doubt capable of being presented with some plausibility; but in truth the situation is more intelligible on the assumption that the promise was really given. The central fact is the formation of a party in the interest of Solomon

saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son o
Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not?
12 Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee
counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the
13 life of thy son Solomon. Go and get thee in unto king
David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord
O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly
Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit
14 upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign? Be
hold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also
15 will come in after thee, and confirm thy words. And
Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber

(verse 8), whose pretensions to the throne must have rested solely on a nomination by his father. How could such a party justify its existence? It must at least have *given out* that Solomon had been privately nominated, so that if there be fraud in the case it must be of somewhat older standing than the theory supposes, though in fact the writer gives no hint that the suspicion of fraud was in his mind at all. The opposite faction may have disbelieved the statement, but could hardly have known it to be false; and there is no reason to suppose that the historian adopted their view. We have therefore to consider which of two things is less improbable—that the younger son, without a shadow of right, should challenge the position of the older; or that the natural heir should seek to assert his claims against an alleged arbitrary nomination by the reigning monarch. The difficulty of the latter alternative is further diminished by the fact that David had obviously lacked the courage to promulgate his decision; and that again is in keeping with the weak indulgence he had always shown to his older children, and to Adonijah in particular (verse 6).

11. Adonijah . . . doth reign: 'hath become king.' See verse 25.

12. save thine own life . . .: by defeating the scheme of Adonijah, whose first step, if successful, would be to remove his rival and enemies.

14. and confirm thy words: not about the alleged oath (which Nathan did *not* confirm), but the statement that Adonijah had been proclaimed (verse 25).

i. 15–21. *Bath-sheba's interview with the king.* Bath-sheba's presentation of the case seems less subtle than that suggested to her by Nathan. Instead of asking, 'Why has Adonijah become

and the king was very old; and Abishag the Shunam-
mite ministered unto the king. And Bath-sheba bowed, 16
and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said,
What wouldest thou? And she said unto him, My lord, 17
thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid,
saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me,
and he shall sit upon my throne. And now, behold, 18
Adonijah reigneth; and thou, my lord the king, knowest
it not: and he hath slain oxen and fatlings and sheep in 19
abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and
Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host:
but Solomon thy servant hath he not called. And thou, 20
my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee,
that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne
of my lord the king after him. Otherwise it shall come 21
to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his
fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted

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ing?' (verse 13), as if to insinuate that David must somehow be responsible, she simply states the fact, and assumes that the king is ignorant of it. Her allusion to the oath with regard to Solomon is also perfectly direct and straightforward; and both lead up to the appeal to the king to give effect to his former purpose, and save her and her son from the fate that threatens them.

18. and thou . . . knowest it not. Not a surprised interrogation, but a circumstantial clause = 'without the knowledge of my lord the king.' The marginal reading 'and now' (*'attā* for *'attā*), though supported by Hebrew MSS., is inferior, and is unknown to the ancient Versions.

20. There is more to be said for the marginal 'now' in this verse: the king must *now* decide whether he will fulfil his oath by making known his will, or supinely acquiesce in Adonijah's usurpation.

21. The connexion is obscure in the original, but is probably correctly expressed by the **otherwise** of R.V.: 'in the event of no decided action being taken by the king, it shall come to pass,' &c.

shall be counted offenders: *lit.* 'shall be sinners.' In early religion the sinfulness of an action is not determined solely by

22 offenders. And, lo, while she yet talked with the king,
23 Nathan the prophet came in. And they told the king,
saying, Behold, Nathan the prophet. And when he was
come in before the king, he bowed himself before the
24 king with his face to the ground. And Nathan said, My
lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after
25 me, and he shall sit upon my throne? For he is gone
down this day, and hath slain oxen and fatlings and
sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons,
and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest;
and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say,
26 God save king Adonijah. But me, even me thy servant,
and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada,
27 and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called. Is this
thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not
shewed unto thy servants who should sit on the throne

its moral quality, but also by its consequences (cf. Gen. xliii. 9, xliv. 32; Num. xxii. 34).

i. 22–27. *Nathan's interview.* The point of the prophet's skilful and not too ingenuous, appeal lies in the insinuation that, to judge from appearances, David must have been acting behind the back of his confidential advisers. Nathan cannot believe the king would do such a thing, yet he cannot imagine any other explanation of Adonijah's conduct! It is noticeable that he never once refers to the oath to Bath-sheba. To avoid the semblance of collusion he pretends to look at the matter from a purely official point of view.

23. The ceremonious announcement of the prophet is to allow Bath-sheba to retire (verse 28), in accordance with Eastern etiquette.

25. For **the captains of the host,** read, with LXX (L), 'Joab the commander-in-chief.' There was but one commander-in-chief.

God save . . .: better, 'Long live King Adonijah!' There is no reason to suppose that the prophet is here drawing on his imagination in order to prejudice the king against Adonijah; nothing is more natural than that he should have kept himself informed by the reports of spies of the doings at the Serpent's Stone.

27. Otherwise: 'If this thing has been brought about . . . then thou hast not,' &c.

of my lord the king after him? Then king David 28
answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came
into the king's presence, and stood before the king.
And the king sware, and said, As the LORD liveth, who 29
hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, verily as I 30
sware unto thee by the LORD, the God of Israel, saying,
Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me and he
shall sit upon my throne in my stead; verily so will I
do this day. Then Bath-sheba bowed with her face to 31
the earth, and did obeisance to the king, and said, Let
my lord king David live for ever. And king David said, 32
Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and
Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before
the king. And the king said unto them, Take with you 33
the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to
ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to

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i. 28–31. *David confirms his oath to Bath-sheba.*

29. For the form of the oath, cf. 2 Sam. iv. 9.

i. 32–40. *The anointing of Solomon.* David gives minute and explicit directions for the immediate installation of Solomon as his successor. By putting these orders in the mouth of the king the writer shows how far it is from his intention to represent him as mentally incapable. The essential and decisive feature of the coronation ceremonies was the act of anointing. It consisted in pouring sacred oil on the head of the monarch, and was probably in ordinary cases performed by a priest. The primary meaning of the rite seems to have been to establish a relation between the king and the deity, in virtue of which his person was considered inviolable (1 Sam. xxiv. 6, xxvi. 9). But with this there was early associated the other idea of the communication of the Divine Spirit, to whose indwelling all kingly virtues were ascribed (1 Sam. xvi. 13). See W. R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*[2] pp. 233, 384; and Weinel in *ZATW* for 1898. The lack of this indispensable function blighted Adonijah's prospects of the throne.

33. the servants of your lord: the bodyguard, associated, as in 2 Sam. xx. 6 f., with the Cherethites and Pelethites (see below).

mine own mule (fem.). The mule is first mentioned in the reign of David as the riding beast of the royal family (2 Sam. xiii. 29, xviii. 9). Common people still used asses (ii. 40; 2 Sam.

34 Gihon: and let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet
anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the
35 trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon. Then ye
shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit upon
my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I
have appointed him to be prince over Israel and over
36 Judah. And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the
king, and said, Amen: the LORD, the God of my lord
37 the king, say so *too*. As the LORD hath been with my
lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make
his throne greater than the throne of my lord king
38 David. So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet,
and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites
and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to
ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.

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xvii. 23), while the war-horse was only introduced under Solomon. These changes mark the rapid advance which the country made in material civilization in the early days of the monarchy.

Gihon, where the anointing was to take place, must have been another sanctuary of ancient Jerusalem (see on verse 9). The indications point to its being identical with the Virgin's Spring (*Bîr Sitti Maryam*) in the Kidron valley, at the foot of the south-east hill on which David's citadel stood (cf. 2 Chron. xxxii. 30, xxxiii. 14). (See Plan of Jerusalem.) It is about 700 yards north of Job's Well, and by so much nearer the palace—an important consideration in view of the haste with which the ceremony had to be carried through.

36. the LORD . . . say so too. The Hebrew gives a weak sense; the true text is perhaps preserved by LXX (L): 'May Yahweh confirm the words of my lord the king[1].'

38. Cherethites and . . . Pelethites: 'Krethi and Plethi,' foreign mercenaries who formed the garrison of the capital, and the standing nucleus of David's army (cf. 2 Sam. viii. 18, xv. 18, xx. 7, 23). The Krethi are mentioned in 1 Sam. xxx. 14 as a tribe in the Negeb; Plethi is possibly a corrupt pronunciation of *Plishtim* (Philistines). It was evidently the discipline and fidelity of these troops that saved the situation for Solomon.

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[1] In the Heb., change כן יאמר יָאֵמֶן and אלהי to את־דברי.

And Zadok the priest took the horn of oil out of the 39
Tent, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon.
And all the people came up after him, and the people 40
piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them. And Adonijah and 41
all the guests that were with him heard it as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore is this noise of the city being in an uproar? While he yet spake, behold, 42
Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said, Come in; for thou art a worthy man, and bringest good tidings. And Jonathan answered and 43
said to Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king: and the king hath sent with him Zadok 44
the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the

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39. out of the Tent: doubtless the tent on Zion in which the ark was placed (2 Sam. vi. 17), though some think a sacred tent at Gihon is intended.

40. piped with pipes. LXX, with a small change of text, reads 'danced in dances,' which is perhaps preferable.

i. 41–49. *The collapse of Adonijah's conspiracy.* The guests at En-rogel had reached the end of their protracted carousal, when Joab's practised ear caught the note of the trumpet. His astonished question is answered by the arrival of Jonathan the son of Abiathar, who is effusively but anxiously hailed as a 'worthy man' and an auspicious messenger. Jonathan's report goes beyond what has been previously related; but not necessarily beyond what he had ascertained to have happened. It is part of the writer's art to carry forward his narrative in the speeches of the actors (so in verse 25). The result is that the assembly breaks up in confusion.

42. On **Jonathan,** see 2 Sam. xv. 27 ff., xvii. 17 ff.

a worthy man: originally 'man of valour,' then 'man of substance,' the expression had come to be used as a vague term of approbation, sometimes = 'a capable person': Gen. xlvii. 6; Exod. xviii. 21; and cf. the fem., Prov. xxxi. 10.

son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites,
and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule:
45 and Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have
anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come up
from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. This
46 is the noise that ye have heard. And also Solomon
47 sitteth on the throne of the kingdom. And moreover
the king's servants came to bless our lord king David,
saying, Thy God make the name of Solomon better than
thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne:
48 and the king bowed himself upon the bed. And also
thus said the king, Blessed be the LORD, the God of
Israel, which hath given one to sit on my throne this
49 day, mine eyes even seeing it. And all the guests of
Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man
50 his way. And Adonijah feared because of Solomon;
and he arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns
51 of the altar. And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold,
Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath laid
hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon
swear unto me this day that he will not slay his servant
52 with the sword. And Solomon said, If he shall shew
himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall
to the earth: but if wickedness be found in him, he

47. bowed himself upon the bed: cf. Gen. xlvii. 31 (J).

i. 50–53. *Adonijah's life spared.* With a clemency rarely displayed by Eastern despots, Solomon promises to spare Adonijah, on condition of his future good behaviour.

50. On the altar as asylum, see Exod. xxi. 12–14: the only historic instances of the institution in Israel are those of Adonijah here, and Joab in ii. 28. The precise significance of the **horns of the altar** is obscure (see W. R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*[2] p. 436, *n.* 2); but it is clear that special sanctity inhered in them; and that in a sense the efficacy of the altar was concentrated there (Exod. xxix. 12; Lev. iv. 7 ff.).

51. this day: render with marg. 'first of all.'

shall die. So king Solomon sent, and they brought him 53
down from the altar. And he came and did obeisance
to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to
thine house.

Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; 2

53. Go to thine house: a command to retire into private life.

(2) ii. 1–12. *David's last charge to Solomon.*

With regard to the genuineness of these verses, great diversity of opinion prevails among recent critics. That verses 2–4 are Deuteronomistic is universally admitted; and it is equally certain that verses 10–12 in their present form are from the hand of the compiler of Kings. The important question is whether the remaining verses (1, 5–9) were found in the primary source to which ch. i and ii. 13 ff. belong, or were composed at a later time in order to acquit Solomon of direct responsibility for the death of Joab and Shimei. The arguments for the second view are chiefly these: *first*, that the real motive for the execution of Joab was his complicity in the plot of Adonijah: hence, so far as he is concerned, verses 5–9 are unhistorical; and *second*, that the writer of verses 13–46 evidently takes that view, so that he at least cannot be the author of verses 5–9. But against this it has to be noted (1) that the reasons assigned for the executions in verses 31 ff., 44 ff., are in perfect agreement with verses 5 9. It is replied, indeed, that these were but the official pretexts by which Solomon justified his action; but that the writer regarded them in that light is a purely gratuitous assumption, and affords no real ground for denying to him the authorship of verses 5–9. (2) In the case of Shimei no motive is even suggested except the alleged 'official pretext.' He is never mentioned as an accomplice of Adonijah—an omission which would be inexplicable if the author knew that he was put to death for the same offence as Joab[1]. (3) The theory offers no explanation of the charge concerning the sons of Barzillai (verse 7), the fulfilment of which is not referred to in the sequel. (4) It is very difficult to believe that any Hebrew writer would have sought to exculpate Solomon by throwing a far blacker stain

[1] The argument here is complicated by the fact that in the LXX the instruction regarding Shimei is *repeated* immediately before verse 36. Since it is unlikely that the same passage should have occurred twice in the original LXX, it is urged that this points to an earlier recension of the text in which Shimei, but not Joab, was marked out for vengeance by David. But in view of the evident superiority of the Hebrew text in chs. i, ii, it is hazardous to base an argument on a hypothetical recension imperfectly preserved in the Greek Version.

2 and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of
all the earth: [D] be thou strong therefore, and shew
3 thyself a man; and keep the charge of the LORD thy
God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, *and* his
commandments, and his judgements, and his testimonies,
according to that which is written in the law of Moses,
that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and
4 whithersoever thou turnest thyself: that the LORD may

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on the memory of David. The only assumption at all plausible would be that it was done under the influence of a late tendency to glorify Solomon as a prince whose annals were unstained by bloodshed (1 Chron. xxii. 8–10). But even that suggestion is negatived by the circumstance that no effort is made to absolve him from the blood of his brother Adonijah. On purely historical grounds, therefore, the case against the genuineness of verses 5–9 does not appear to be made out. On *moral* grounds, it might be a satisfaction to get rid of an incident so incongruous with the chivalrous magnanimity of David's character. Yet we must remember that the passage finds an exact parallel in his terrible reprisal on Saul's house for the massacre of the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi). David was after all a child of his age, liable to be swayed by the superstitious beliefs then prevalent, which quenched his nobler impulses and made ideal ethical conduct impossible. (See further on verses 6 and 8.)

ii. 1–4. *General charge to personal piety.* The section is almost entirely written by the compiler; verses 2^{b}–4 especially exhibiting in nearly every phrase the characteristic style of the Deuteronomic school. Note the parallels pointed out below.

1. drew nigh that he should die: cf. Gen. xlvii. 29 (J); Deut. xxxi. 14.

2. go the way of all the earth: as Joshua xxiii. 14 (a Deuteronomic passage).

be . . . strong: Joshua i. 6 ff.

3. keep the charge: Deut. xi. 1; Joshua xxii. 3.

walk in his ways: Deut. viii. 6, x. 12, xi. 22, &c.

keep his statutes: Deut. iv. 40, vii. 11, x. 13, &c.

his testimonies: Deut. iv. 45, vi. 17, 20.

written in the law of Moses: i. e. the Book of Deuteronomy, the only part of the Pentateuch to which this title is ever applied by the compiler of Kings. Comp. Deut. xvii. 18–20, where the diligent study of the book is specially enjoined on the king.

that thou mayest prosper: Deut. xxix. 9; Joshua i. 7.

establish his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel. [C] Moreover thou knowest also 5 what Joab the son of Zeruiah did unto me, even what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his 6 hoar head go down to the grave in peace. But shew 7

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4. his word which he spake concerning me. The reference is to 2 Sam. vii. 12 ff., the contents of which are freely reproduced in the remainder of this verse.

with all their heart and with all their soul: Deut. iv. 29, vi. 5, x. 12; Joshua xxii. 5, &c.

ii. 5–9. *Specific charges regarding individuals.*

5, 6. Joab is marked for vengeance on account of the treacherous assassinations of 'the two commanders-in-chief of Israel'—Abner (2 Sam. iii. 27) and Amasa (xx. 8–10). The clause **and** *set* (so we must render as in marg.) **the blood of war in peace** is omitted by some of the best MSS. of the LXX, possibly on account of the harshness of the Hebrew phrase. The best reading might be that of LXX (L), 'and avenged the blood of war in peace,' which describes exactly the murder of Abner: it was a base and treacherous revenge for the death of Asahel, who had been killed in fair fight. The words may, however, be a gloss. In the following clause it is better (with the same authority) to read 'innocent blood' for **blood of war:** perhaps also 'my girdle . . ., my loins . . ., my sandals . . .,' &c. This at least emphasizes the point that the murders were committed under circumstances that gave colour to the suspicion that David himself was privy to them.

6. Do therefore . . . wisdom: i. e. find some specious pretext for bringing Joab to his death (cf. verse 9).

go down to Sheol: see verse 9. It is difficult for us to estimate fairly the measure of blame attaching to David in this transaction. Since Joab's crimes had been to his advantage, the accusation of personal vindictiveness may be ruled out of con-

kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came
8 to me when I fled from Absalom thy brother. And, behold, there is with thee Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite, of Bahurim, who cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with
9 the sword. Now therefore hold him not guiltless, for

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sideration, unless we are to go behind the narrative and suppose him to have been actuated by a desire to avenge the death of Absalom, or by a vague resentment at the masterful ascendency which Joab had so long exercised over him. We must rather assume that David was influenced by a genuine fear lest the guilt of unrequited murder should bring disaster on his kingdom (see verses 31, 33); and the question is how far that anxiety justified him in inciting Solomon to an act of vengeance which he had lacked either the power or the courage to execute himself. On the most lenient view it must be frankly acknowledged that David's conduct is abhorrent to our ideas of justice and honour; and it is doubtful if it would not have been condemned by the highest moral standard of his own time. But while we admit the stain on the memory of the great king, we have no right to deny to him the possession of all nobler qualities of character, or (like Renan) to speak of this incident as a revelation of 'the black perfidy of his hypocritical soul' (*Histoire du peuple d'Israël*, ii. p. 92).

7. the sons of Barzillai (see 2 Sam. xvii. 27 ff., xix. 33 ff.) are to continue the recipients of a royal pension: this, and not actual fellowship at table, is supposed to be the meaning of the expression **of those that eat at thy table.** But see 2 Sam. ix. 7 ff., xix. 28.

8, 9. Shimei the son of Gera: see 2 Sam. xvi. 5 ff., xix. 16 ff.

Bahurim: on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho (2 Sam. iii. 16, xvi. 5, xvii. 18); the exact site is not certainly known.

a grievous (or *potent*) **curse.** The curse once uttered was conceived as having an objective existence, and endowed with self-fulfilling energy, which it might retain indefinitely, unless it could be rolled back on him who uttered it. That this was the idea in David's mind may be inferred from verses 44 f.

I will not . . . sword. The oath of David as recorded in 2 Sam. xix. 23 is not capable of the sinister construction which is here suggested, viz. that Solomon was not bound by its literal terms. It may be the case (Ewald, *History*, iii. p. 214) that the

thou art a wise man; and thou wilt know what thou oughtest to do unto him, and thou shalt bring his hoar head down to the grave with blood. [D] And David 10
slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David. And the days that David reigned over Israel 11
were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

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exercise of the prerogative of mercy was understood to expire with a change of sovereign; but here again it must be confessed that David's superstitious foreboding leads him to commit an action which to our minds is utterly dishonourable: he 'keeps the word of promise to the ear, and breaks it to the hope.'

9. thou art a wise man: see on verse 6.

bring his hoar head down to Sheol (marg.) **with blood:** Sheol, the underworld, the realm of shades, is the Hebrew equivalent of the Homeric Hades. It is the universal gathering-place of the souls of the departed, to which good and bad alike 'go down' at death. The verse expresses a common belief that the shade preserves the appearance of the living man, or more accurately the appearance with which he made his exit from this world. Shimei's bloodstained hair remains a witness for ever to the dishonoured death he had died. Cf. Gen. xxxvii. 35, xlii. 38, xliv. 29, 31 (J).

ii. 10–12. *Concluding notice of David's reign.* We have here the first occurrence of the compiler's 'framework' (Introd., p. 10 ff.). The original document must no doubt have contained at this point a notice of the death of David.

10. Is the stereotyped formula in which the death of the kings of Judah is recorded (cf. xi. 43, xiv. 31, &c.).

slept (strictly 'lay') **with his fathers.** The expression is obviously derived from interment in the family sepulchre (Gen. xlvii. 30), and in its literal sense is inapplicable to David, whose ancestors must have been buried in Beth-lehem. But there are many passages besides this which prove that the expression had been extended, and, so to speak, spiritualized, in the sense of reunion in Sheol (e.g., Deut. xxxi. 16). The whole conception of Sheol, indeed, was largely a projection of the earthly burying place into the sphere of the unseen.

the city of David: the new city built on the site of the old Jebusite fort which had been captured by David (2 Sam. v. 9). As to its situation, see Appendix, Note 1.

11. Cf. 2 Sam. v. 5.

12 And Solomon sat upon the throne of David his father;
13 and his kingdom was established greatly. [C] Then
Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba the
mother of Solomon. And she said, Comest thou peace-
14 ably? And he said, Peaceably. He said moreover, I
have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, Say on.
15 And he said, Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine,
and that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should
reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is

(3) ii. 13–46. *Removal of Solomon's Enemies.*

ii. 13–25. *The fate of Adonijah.* The defeated candidate for the throne seeks an interview with Bath-sheba, now the queen-mother, desiring her to use her influence with Solomon on his behalf. Bath-sheba is completely won over by his pathetic appeal: he speaks as a man resigned to the loss of the great ambition of his life, and with only one small wish left—to receive the beautiful Abishag in marriage. The admirable detachment and impartiality of the narrator allows this request to make on us the same impression as it made on Bath-sheba, and actually leaves us in some uncertainty whether Adonijah cherished the treasonable design which Solomon attributed to him. The probability, however, is that he was not so innocent as Bath-sheba imagined. According to an ancient Semitic custom, which survived in Arabia down to the time of Mohammed (W. R. Smith, *Kinship*[1], p. 86 ff.), the wives of a man deceased passed with the other property to his heir. Similarly among the Hebrews great importance was attached, in the case of a royal succession, to the possession of the wives and concubines of the late monarch (see 2 Sam. iii. 7, xii. 8, xvi. 21 f.). Hence to grant Adonijah's wish would strengthen immensely his claim to be regarded as David's lawful heir; and since he had already the right of primogeniture in his favour, and was supported by influential men, Solomon's position might easily have been rendered untenable. He accordingly refuses the request, and sentences his brother to death; a sentence carried out by Benaiah as captain of the bodyguard.

13. Comest thou peaceably? 'Is this a friendly visit?' The astonishment and alarm of the question are natural in the strained relations between the two factions.

15. the kingdom was mine. That Adonijah was really looked on as the heir-presumptive is virtually admitted by Solomon in verse 22, 'he is my elder brother.'

ecome my brother's: for it was his from the LORD.
nd now I ask one petition of thee, deny me not. And 16
ie said unto him, Say on. And he said, Speak, I pray 17
iee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee
ay,) that he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife.
nd Bath-sheba said, Well; I will speak for thee unto 18
ie king. Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon, 19
; speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up
) meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down
n his throne, and caused a throne to be set for the
ing's mother; and she sat on his right hand. Then 20
ie said, I ask one small petition of thee; deny me not.
nd the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother: for
will not deny thee. And she said, Let Abishag the 21
hunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife.
nd king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, 22
nd why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for
Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; for he is
iine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the
riest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah. Then king 23
olomon sware by the LORD, saying, God do so to me,

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19. As the queen-mother, Bath-sheba enjoys a dignity in the court which had not belonged to her while David was alive: contrast the ceremony of this reception with the interview of 15, 16.

For **bowed himself unto her,** we should read with LXX, 'kissed her.'

20, 21. With a certain consciousness of her new importance, Bath-sheba presents Adonijah's petition as her own personal request.

22. The king's anger breaks out in an ironical question: 'Why ask Abishag only? Why not the kingdom at once?' See above.

even for him: unintelligible. With a slight change of text we may read, 'and on his side are Abiathar . . . and Joab.' Solomon finds in the incident evidence of a fresh conspiracy; and this supplies him with the desired occasion for proceeding against Joab.

and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this wor
24 against his own life. Now therefore as the LORD liveth
who hath established me, and set me on the throne o
David my father, and who hath made me an house, a
he promised, surely Adonijah shall be put to death th
25 day. And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaia
the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him, that he died
26 And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee t
Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou art worthy o
death: but I will not at this time put thee to death
because thou barest the ark of the Lord GOD before
David my father, and because thou wast afflicted in a
27 wherein my father was afflicted. [D] So Solomon thrust
out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; that h
might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake

23. against his own life: better, 'at the cost of his life.'

ii. 26, 27. *The banishment of Abiathar.* His life is spared ostensibly for his long fidelity to David, although, for that matter Joab's devotion had been still more conspicuous. The king was no doubt influenced by other reasons as well; partly the knowledge that Abiathar was a much less dangerous enemy than Joab and partly perhaps a regard for the sanctity of his office. He is banished to his patrimonial estate at Anathoth.

26. The words **at this time** ought to be taken (as by LXX) with the previous clause, 'thou art worthy of death this day, but I will not,' &c.

Anathoth is the modern *'Anātā*, two and a half miles north east of Jerusalem. How Abiathar came to have lands there we do not know; but the place remained for many centuries the residence of a priestly family, from which sprang the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. i. 1).

27. While Abiathar is removed from the royal sanctuary, the original narrative said nothing of a degradation from the priesthood, for this verse must be an editorial insertion. It is based on 1 Sam. ii. 27–36, which, in its present form at least, can hardly have been written earlier than Josiah's reformation. The purpose of the gloss is not so much to call attention to the fulfilment of a prediction as to vindicate the legitimacy of the Zadokite priesthood, which, humanly speaking, owed its elevation to this political measure of Solomon. See on verse 35.

ncerning the house of Eli in Shiloh. [C] And the 28
dings came to Joab: for Joab had turned after
donijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And
ab fled unto the Tent of the LORD, and caught hold
the horns of the altar. And it was told king 29
lomon, Joab is fled unto the Tent of the LORD, and,
hold, he is by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah
e son of Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him. And 30
enaiah came to the Tent of the LORD, and said unto
m, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said,
ay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the
ng word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he
nswered me. And the king said unto him, Do as he 31
ith said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou
ayest take away the blood, which Joab shed without
use, from me and from my father's house. And the 32
ORD shall return his blood upon his own head, because

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ii. 28-34. *The end of Joab.* On hearing the rumour of these currences, Joab had sought shelter at the altar; and there, ithout further trial, he is cut down by the order of Solomon.

28. See i. 50.

The parenthetic sentence **for Joab had turned** explains omewhat superfluously) how and why the rumour affected ab: that it gives the author's view of the reason for his ndemnation, as opposed to the official justification in verses 31 f., not so evident.

the Tent of the LORD is the tent which David had erected r the ark (i. 39; 2 Sam. vi. 17).

29. The story is amplified in the LXX by a long addition in e middle of the verse, which may be quoted, although it adds thing to the sense: 'Then Solomon sent to Joab saying, Wherefore hast thou fled to the altar? And Joab said, Because feared before thy face, and I fled to the LORD. And Solomon nt Benaiah,' &c.

31. and bury him. Joab is to be spared the last indignity being denied the rites of sepulture.

32. his blood upon his own head: a common, but not eaningless, metaphor. It expresses the idea that blood thus ghteously shed in the administration of justice creates no new

he fell upon two men more righteous and better than he
and slew them with the sword, and my father David
knew it not, *to wit*, Abner the son of Ner, captain o
the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain
33 of the host of Judah. So shall their blood return upon
the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for
ever: but unto David, and unto his seed, and unto his
house, and unto his throne, shall there be peace for ever
34 from the LORD. Then Benaiah the son of Jehoiada
went up, and fell upon him, and slew him; and he was
35 buried in his own house in the wilderness. And the
king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over
the host: and Zadok the priest did the king put in the
36 room of Abiathar. And the king sent and called for
Shimei, and said unto him, Build thee an house in

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blood-feud: the otherwise endless *vendetta* is stayed. Compare the opposite case in the next verse.

34. Like Samuel (1 Sam. xxv. 1), Joab is buried **in his own house,** which was in the **wilderness** of Judea (see the graphic description in G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.*, p. 312 ff.). Joab's house and family grave would naturally be in the neighbourhood of Beth-lehem.

35. The installation of Zadok, here inserted by an editor, was an event of extraordinary significance in the religious history of Israel. In the first instance, it was nothing more than the selection of a particular Levitical line as custodians of the royal sanctuary; but with the growing importance of the Jerusalem temple the influence of its priesthood steadily increased; and that influence seems, on the whole, to have been exercised in the true interests of the national religion. The High Priesthood appears to have remained in the family till the murder of Onias in B.C. 171 (2 Macc. iv. 34). Even after the restoration of Jewish independence, the name Zadokite survived as the designation of the sect of the Sadducees, who were originally the old temple aristocracy, who adhered as a body to the policy of the priest-princes of the Asmonean house.

ii. 36–46. *The reckoning with Shimei.* He is summoned from Bahurim and ordered to take up his residence in Jerusalem, where his movements could be closely watched; and is made to swear,

erusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any
hither. For on the day thou goest out, and passest 37
ver the brook Kidron, know thou for certain that thou
halt surely die: thy blood shall be upon thine own
ead. And Shimei said unto the king, The saying is 38
ood: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant
o. And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days. And 39
came to pass at the end of three years, that two of the
ervants of Shimei ran away unto Achish, son of Maacah,
ing of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, Behold,
ny servants be in Gath. And Shimei arose, and 40
addled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish, to seek his
ervants: and Shimei went, and brought his servants
om Gath. And it was told Solomon that Shimei had 41
one from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.
nd the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto 42
im, Did I not make thee to swear by the LORD, and
rotested unto thee, saying, Know for certain, that on
he day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither,
hou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, The
aying that I have heard is good. Why then hast thou 43

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pain of death, not to pass the limits of the city. (The brook idron is mentioned as the boundary he would have to cross to et back to his old haunts and connexions among the Benjamites.) or three years he observed the compact; then his restless spirit und a slight occasion for an excursion in the direction opposite that which he was expected to take. The affair is duly reported Solomon; and Shimei is condemned to death.

39. Achish, son of Maacah, king of Gath. In 1 Sam. xxvii. 2 e read of an Achish, son of 'Maoch'; and though more than forty ears had elapsed, the same king must probably be meant; and the mes should doubtless be read alike in the two passages.

42. protested unto thee: 'solemnly admonished thee.' The st clause, **and thou saidst . . . good,** is not found in the LXX, rhaps owing to a mistake of the translator. If genuine, it ould be rendered: 'Good is the matter! I have heard,' which Hebrew for 'Very good! I obey.' (Cf. verse 38.)

not kept the oath of the LORD, and the commandment
44 that I have charged thee with? The king said moreover
to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine
heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father:
therefore the LORD shall return thy wickedness upon
45 thine own head. But king Solomon shall be blessed,
and the throne of David shall be established before the
46 LORD for ever. So the king commanded Benaiah the
son of Jehoiada; and he went out, and fell upon him,
that he died. And the kingdom was established in the
hand of Solomon.

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44. Behind the technical offence lies a graver charge, which is the real ground of his condemnation. The words **which thine heart is privy to** (*lit.* 'knoweth') seem to represent a variant of the preceding clause.

shall return: better perhaps, 'hath returned' (so LXX, &c.). Shimei's infatuated conduct was Yahweh's sentence on his wickedness.

45. king Solomon shall be blessed: by the removal of the curse from his house (see on verse 8).

46. And the kingdom. The sentence is inserted by the LXX (in a corrupt form) in the middle of verse 35. It is hard to say which may have been its original position.

Note on the LXX of chapter ii.

One of the most important peculiarities of the Greek text of Kings is found in the latter part of chap. ii, in the form of two very long additions, one between verses 35 and 36, and the other after verse 46. (It has to be remembered that the last clause of verse 46 is transferred to the middle of verse 35; see the last note.) The additional verses are numbered in Swete's edition by the letters of the alphabet, as ii. $35^{a, b, c} \ldots ^{o}$; and ii. $46^{a} \ldots ^{l}$ and this notation is adopted in the following notes, in the few instances where it is necessary to refer to the passages. Each insertion begins with a notice of Solomon's wisdom and power and then passes on to a series of fragmentary data, such as we frequently find in the Hebrew of chaps. iii–xi. The first (35^{l-o}) ends with an account of David's charge regarding Shimei, which naturally leads up to the narrative of the death of the latter, as in verses 36–46. The second insertion ends with a verse (46^{l}) which corresponds generally with iv. 1 of the Hebrew; but in

[A] And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of 3

he Vatican MS. (LXX (B)), this is followed by a break in the continuity, which shows that the LXX text has been abruptly dropped (probably at the end of a page) to make way for the present Hebrew text. It is impossible here to discuss the intricate problems of textual history which are suggested by these variations. The hypothesis that the LXX represents an independent recension, older than the Hebrew, cannot be established. With very few exceptions the inserted notices all occur in one place or another of the Hebrew of iii–xi; and most of the facts can be explained by assuming that they are an attempted rearrangement of the material supplied by the Hebrew for the history of Solomon. At the same time, their secondary character does not destroy their value for the criticism of the text. The compilation must have been made from an earlier form of the Hebrew ; and in some cases has preserved a better reading. It is possible also that it underwent expansion here and there, and that in its amplified form it came into the hands of a later scribe, who used it to annotate his Hebrew MS.

iii–xi. The Reign of Solomon.

The account of Solomon's reign occupies (if we include i, ii) more than a fourth part of the two Books of Kings ; and is arranged upon a method almost peculiar to this section. Instead of the graphic continuous narratives which form the basis of the history of David, we have (in iii–xi) a lifeless and somewhat confused assortment of very heterogeneous material, 'determined less by chronological sequence than by community of subject' (Driver). The selection of material seems to have been influenced largely by two leading points of view: a sense of Solomon's importance as the founder of the temple ; and admiration of him as the *beau idéal* of wisdom and regal magnificence. The first of these appealed most strongly to the Deuteronomic editors, as we may judge from the disproportionate space (more than half the section) allotted to the building and inauguration of the sanctuary (v. 1—ix. 9). The second appears in the older authorities ; and also in some late additions which celebrate the splendour of Solomon's rule in terms which occasionally exceed historical probability.

The literary analysis of the section is extremely complicated. Setting aside post-redactional glosses and insertions of various kinds, we can distinguish three kinds of material which enter into the composition :—

(1) A statistical or annalistic account of Solomon's kingdom, commencing at iv. 1 and extending to iv. 28, resumed in ix. 10–28, and concluding with x. 14–29 (A). It is a reasonable assumption

Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her

that these detached notices are based in the first instance on the state records of the reign, although the form and connexion in which they now appear must be due to the labours of successive editors. It is uncertain whether the description of the temple buildings and utensils in vi, vii is taken from the same source, or from an independent document (T) preserved in the temple archives.

(2) A series of narratives (S), partly historical, describing important events in the reign, and partly biographical, illustrative of Solomon's wisdom and greatness: iii. 4–13, 16–28, v. 1—vi. 1, viii. 1–13, x. 1–13, the basis of xi. 1–8, xi. 14–22, 26–31, 40. It is not to be assumed that all these passages are derived from a single document, or belong to one age: the story of the queen of Sheba (x. 1–13) has certain traces of later authorship (see p. 166); while the account of Jeroboam (xi. 26 ff.), which anticipates xii, shows that some at least of the sources were not peculiar to the history of Solomon, but belonged to historical works of more comprehensive scope.

(3) The Deuteronomic supplements (D), which occur partly in the form of short interpolations, and partly as longer compositions: iii. 3, 14 f., v. 4 f., vi. 11–13, viii. 14 61, ix. 1–9, xi. 9–13, 32–39, 41–43. Of these again some parts appear to be pre-Exilic, and others Exilic or post-Exilic.

The most interesting question which here arises concerns the relation of (1) and (2) to the work cited in xi. 41 as the Book of the Acts of Solomon. Since it contained some account of Solomon's 'wisdom,' it may be presumed at least to have included certain anecdotes of the kind mentioned under (2). Now there is evidence that some of these narratives had been combined with annalistic material in the sources which lay before the compiler; and a peculiar use of the particle 'then' (iii. 16, viii. 1, 12, ix. 11, 24, xi. 7) suggests that the combination had been effected in a document of the same general character as the chronicles of the kings of Israel and Judah. It is possible, therefore—though far from certain—that this was the history of Solomon referred to. But that *all* the notices grouped under (1) had been thus treated we can hardly assume, in view of the extremely fragmentary nature of the compilation and the numerous displacements revealed by a comparison of the Hebrew text with the LXX. It seems better, accordingly, to denote these by a special symbol (A), and to use (S) for the more continuous narratives.

It is from the pre-Deuteronomic sources that we must start if we are to form a historical estimate of the character and policy of Solomon. There is no doubt that these writers present his government on the whole in a favourable light. We cannot be

into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and

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wrong in thinking of the reign as a period of rapidly advancing civilization, of great material prosperity and outward splendour; nor in attributing all this mainly to the initiative and enterprise of the monarch. Solomon was a man of brilliant genius and resource, inspired by a passion for self-aggrandizement which found an outlet in the ostentatious luxury of his court and the costly building projects that made his name famous. He was quick to perceive the opportunities offered to the newly consolidated nationality of Israel by its geographical position and political relations; and he knew how to utilize these advantages in opening up new sources of revenue. But the history enables us to see at the same time that his rule was by no means an unmixed blessing to his subjects. It shows that under him the empire of David began to crumble; that his government, if essentially just, was despotic and oppressive; and that his selfish ambitions exhausted the financial resources of the country. And the silence of the historians is perhaps even more eloquent than their speech. It is significant that they have little to tell of true moral greatness, or any application of his fabulous wealth except the barren and extravagant display of an oriental court. We can readily understand that Solomon, with his purely intellectual eminence and his soaring cosmopolitan ideas, excited the admiration rather than the affection of his people; and that his harsh and unsympathetic administration produced a smouldering discontent which broke out in open rebellion immediately after his death.

iii. *Introductory Narratives.*

iii. 1. *Solomon's marriage with an Egyptian princess.*—The verse hardly stands here in its proper position. In the LXX it is united with ix. 16 of the Hebrew, and the two are inserted after iv. 34 of the E. V. (between verses 14 and 15 of ch. v in the Hebrew). In that connexion the incident would belong to the annalistic account of Solomon's reign which commences at iv. 1; and, on the whole, this may be presumed to have been its original setting. The history of Solomon will then have begun in the usual way, with the compiler's verdict on his religious attitude, in verse 3.

1. made affinity with: 'became the son-in-law of.' The Pharaoh referred to must have been a predecessor of Shishak (xiv. 25), the founder of the twenty-second dynasty; and therefore one of the last kings of the twenty-first (Tanitic) dynasty. Winckler (*KAT*^{3}, p. 236) points out that, according to a passage in the Tel-Amarna tablets, it was impossible for an Egyptian princess to marry a foreigner; hence he argues that there must

2 the wall of Jerusalem round about. [Z] Only the
people sacrificed in the high places, because there was
no house built for the name of the LORD until those
3 days. [D] And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in
the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and
burnt incense in the high places.

4 [S] And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there;

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be a confusion here between Miṣraim (Egypt) and the Arabian kingdom of Muṣri. The passage occurs in a correspondence between the kings of Egypt and Babylon, in which the former refuses his daughter to the latter on the ground that such a thing had never been done. His royal correspondent, however, appears to treat the refusal as a diplomatic evasion. In any case, it happened four or five centuries before the time of Solomon. (See *KIB*, v. p. 8 f.)

On the **wall of Jerusalem** see ix. 15.

iii. 2, 3. *Religious judgements on Solomon.* The word 'only' in verse 2, qualifying nothing in the preceding context, indicates that there has been some textual disturbance, which is probably to be explained as follows:—The Deuteronomic compiler is responsible for verse 3 alone, which expresses, in the terms usually applied to the good kings of Judah, a general commendation of Solomon's conduct (see xv. 14; 2 Kings xii. 3, &c., &c.). Verse 2 was first written as a marginal comment by a later scribe, who supposed that the second half of verse 3 referred merely to the sacrifice at Gibeon, and wished to justify Solomon by pointing out that this was due to the temple not being built. Eventually the gloss was incorporated in the text in its present unsuitable position. Verse 2, however, still represents the Deuteronomic point of view: the law of the one sanctuary did not come into practical operation until the temple was built. The older narrative (verse 4) accepts the worship of the high places as a matter of course.

3. loved the LORD, walking: a Deuteronomic phrase; Deut. x. 12, xi. 22, &c.

sacrificed and burnt incense: strictly, 'slaughtered and turned into (sacrificial) smoke'; an expression of frequent occurrence in the Deuteronomic portions of Kings (xi. 8, xxii. 43; 2 Kings xii. 3, &c.).

iii. 4–15. *Solomon's initiatory sacrifice and vision at Gibeon.* Solomon appears to have celebrated his accession by a great

for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar. In Gibeon 5
the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night:
and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And 6
Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant
David my father great kindness, [D] according as he

religious ceremony at the most frequented sanctuary in the vicinity of Jerusalem. On the following night Yahweh appears to him in a dream, and offers the fulfilment of whatever request he may make. The incident has a profound interest and significance. The youthful monarch, solemnized perhaps by the imposing service in which he had been engaged, and impressed by a sense of the responsibilities of government, puts aside the prospect of earthly greatness, and definitely chooses as his portion the wisdom and righteousness necessary for the right discharge of his exalted duties. His unselfish aspiration is rewarded by a promise not only of the wisdom he had asked, but of wealth and honour and long life. It is noteworthy that the two recorded Divine communications to Solomon take place, not through the medium of prophecy, but through dreams in a sacred place (cf. ix. 1, 2). In the whole history of Solomon there is no instance of prophetic influence on his policy, such as Nathan and Gad had exerted in the reign of David. The passage contains numerous traces of the hand of the compiler, especially in verses 6 and 14; but the basis of the narrative is undoubtedly ancient. See Burney, p. 28ff., who gives a careful comparison of the text with the parallel in 2 Chron. i. 3–13.

4. Gibeon, the modern *el-Jīb*, was in the territory of Benjamin, some six miles north-west of Jerusalem. It was **the great** (i. e. 'chief') **high place,** possibly on account of its central position, and its proximity to the capital.

high place (Heb. *bāmāh*) is the ancient and technical name (found also on the Moabite Stone) of the local Canaanitish sanctuaries, which had been adopted by the Israelites, and consecrated to the worship of Yahweh. Every town and village had such a place of sacrifice, situated on the 'height' on whose slope the town was built (1 Sam. ix. 10ff.). In the Chronicler's version of the incident (2 Chron. i. 3 ff.), a different reason is given for the choice of Gibeon for the sacrifice, viz. that the Mosaic tabernacle and the brazen altar were there, though the ark was in Jerusalem. That explanation is certainly unhistorical; but it is one which arose naturally from the fixed belief that sacrifice elsewhere than at the one legitimate sanctuary had always been impossible.

6. The phraseology here is mostly Deuteronomic.

walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son
7 to sit on his throne, as it is this day. [S] And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I
8 know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for
9 multitude. Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great
10 people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon
11 had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because

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thou hast kept: reserved this as thy crowning act of goodness to David; cf. i. 48.

7. I am but a little child is of course a hyperbolical expression for inexperience. The actual age of Solomon at his accession is not stated. If the numbers in xiv. 21 and xi. 42 be correct, he had already a son; and his vigorous action in ch. ii certainly suggests that he had passed beyond boyhood. Tradition makes him to have been really a child. Some copies of the LXX insert in ii. 12 a notice that he was twelve years old; Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 211) says he was fourteen, giving him, however, a reign of eighty years.

to go out or come in: i. e., to discharge the duties of one's station (1 Sam. xviii. 16).

8. cannot be . . . counted for multitude: cf. viii. 5; Gen. xvi. 10, xxxii. 12.

9. an understanding heart: *lit.* 'a hearing heart' (as marg.); i. e. a receptive mind, one that listens and considers before it decides (cf. 2 Sam. xiv. 17; Prov. xxi. 28).

to judge has here almost the sense of 'to govern,' the administration of justice being the principal function of the king in time of peace.

10, 11. To have perceived the supreme importance of this quality, as contrasted with external greatness and military glory, is the ethically valuable element in Solomon's choice which makes it pleasing to God.

thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgement; behold, I 12
have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee 13
that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee, all thy days. [D] And if thou wilt walk in my 14
ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.
[S] And Solomon awoke, and, behold, it was a dream: 15
and he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

Then came there two women, that were harlots, unto 16

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12. an understanding heart: better, 'a discerning mind'; the marginal reference 'hearing' is a mistake.

13. all thy days: this senseless clause should be omitted with the LXX.

14. See on ii. 2–4.

15 is generally considered to be the work of a still later writer, who thought that if Solomon had committed the irregularity of sacrificing at a high place, he would be sure to put matters right by a sort of indemnifying ceremony at the proper place. But the first sentence must be from the old source; and for the rest, there is perhaps nothing very improbable in the statement that the return to Jerusalem was signalized by fresh sacrifices before the ark, where there seems to have been an altar (ii. 29). The phrase 'ark *of the covenant* of Yahweh' may be Deuteronomic; but the addition has crept into the text in other early passages, and there is no reason why it might not have done so here.

iii. 16–28. *An instance of Solomon's sagacity.* The story comes in here appropriately as an illustration of the endowment which

17 the king, and stood before him. And the one woman
said, Oh my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house;
and I was delivered of a child with her in the house.
18 And it came to pass the third day after I was delivered,
that this woman was delivered also; and we were
together; there was no stranger with us in the house,
19 save we two in the house. And this woman's child died
20 in the night; because she overlaid it. And she arose at
midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine
handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her
21 dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the

Solomon had obtained in answer to his prayer. To us it is interesting as showing the kind of quality which the early Hebrews popularly called 'wisdom' (*ḥokmāh*), and which was so greatly esteemed among them. It is not the faculty of philosophical reflection, nor is it essentially a moral virtue; 'the wisdom which the East admires' is 'the clever judicial decision, the faculty of clothing a practical experience in a rule of life or a witty saying, the acuteness which can solve an enigma' (Duncker). That blending of insight, shrewdness and tact which penetrates the disguises of human action, and plays deftly on the true motives which lie beneath, is the wisdom of Solomon; and Jewish legend relates many examples, more extravagant than this, of his peculiar gift. Grotius called attention to an interesting parallel in Diodorus Siculus: Ariopharnes, king of Thrace, had to decide which of three pretenders was really the son of the dead king of the Cimmerians; he discovered the truth by ordering them to pierce the body of the father with a spear, when of course the true son refused. (Quoted by Thenius.)

16. Then. The other instances of this use of the word (see on p. 82 above) are viii. 1, 12, ix. 11, 24, xi. 7, xvi. 21, xxii. 49; 2 Kings viii. 22, xii. 17, xiv. 8, xv. 16, xvi. 5. 'In many cases the notices introduced by it lack any definite point of attachment in the preceding narrative: at the same time, their directness of statement and terseness of form suggest the inference that they may be derived immediately from the contemporary annalistic records' (Driver, *Introd.*[6] p. 203). Driver considers the usage to be a characteristic of the compiler; but it is equally probable that it belongs to the style of the documents he employed.

18. no stranger: so that the case cannot be decided by evidence.

morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear. And the other 22
woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son. Thus they spake before the king. Then said the king, The one saith, 23
This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living. And the king said, Fetch me a sword. 24
And they brought a sword before the king. And the 25
king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the 26
woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, Oh my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, It shall be neither mine nor thine; divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her 27
the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgement 28
which the king had judged; and they feared the king:

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21. considered it: better, 'looked at it narrowly' (as Isa. xiv. 16).

22, 23. The LXX omits the sentence **And this said . . . my son** in verse 22, and in the following verse reads, 'Thou sayest . . and thou sayest,' instead of **The one saith . . . and the other saith.** The Hebrew is preferable in both cases: in the first, because it depicts better the unseemly wrangling of the two women before the king; and in the second, because a soliloquy of Solomon on the peculiar situation is the most suitable prelude to verse 24.

26. her bowels yearned: *lit.* 'grew warm' or 'tender'; cf. Gen. xliii. 30 (J).

27. give her the living child. Since the pronoun does not refer to the last speaker, it may be better to read, somewhat as LXX, 'Give it to her who says, Give her the living child . . . : she is its mother.'

for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgement.

4 [A] And king Solomon was king over all Israel.
2 And these were the princes which he had; Azariah the
3 son of Zadok, the priest; Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha, scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the

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28. the wisdom of God: better, 'Divine wisdom.'

iv. *Annalistic account of Solomon's Kingdom.*

The chapter consists for the most part of a series of extracts from the official Annals of Solomon's reign: these (though interspersed with a few notices of later date) continue to the end of verse 28. Since a heading similar to verse 1 precedes the list of David's officials in 2 Sam. viii. 15, it seems a plausible conjecture that it forms the introduction to an independent account of the reign, transferred bodily either from the State documents, or from some abridgement of them which had been published (so Kittel).

iv. 2–6. *List of Solomon's Ministers.* The list occurs twice in the LXX; once in the present connexion, and again as part of the long addition in ch. ii (ii. 46 h)[1]. The variations of the three texts are very considerable; but in the first case the divergences from the Hebrew can, on the whole, be fairly explained by scribal errors either in the Hebrew or the Greek. In the other case, however, the discrepancies are very remarkable and perplexing. Benzinger has hazarded the bold suggestion that we have really to do with two independent compilations, based on two different official lists, one belonging to an earlier and the other to a later period of the reign. It is also of interest to compare the corresponding lists for the reign of David, which are found in 2 Sam. viii. 17 f., and xx. 23–26.

2. princes: (Heb. *sārîm*, often rendered 'captains') is the technical designation of the high civil and military officials of the monarchical régime. Here it denotes the Ministers of State, or heads of departments.

the (chief) **priest is Azariah the son of Zadok,** hence the list cannot be from the very beginning of the reign (see ii. 35).

3. The **scribes,** or 'secretaries' (*lit.* 'writers') would be the officials to whom was entrusted the conduct of correspondence, the keeping of records, the preparation of documents, &c. The office would seem, like the priesthood, to have been hereditary; for **Shisha,** the father of **Elihoreph** (LXX, 'Eliaph' or 'Eliab')

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[1] See the note on p. 80 f.

recorder; and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the 4
host; and Zadok and Abiathar were priests; and Azariah 5
the son of Nathan was over the officers; and Zabud the
son of Nathan was priest, *and* the king's friend; and 6
Ahishar was over the household; and Adoniram the son
of Abda was over the levy. And Solomon had twelve 7

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and **Ahijah**, can easily be recognized through all its protean disguises as the name of David's secretary (Seraiah, 2 Sam. viii. 17; Sheva, xx. 25). In the LXX of ii. 46[h] the father still holds the office.

The business of the **recorder** (*mazkîr*, *lit.* 'remembrancer') was probably to bring important matters of State to the notice of the king. The office is still held by **Jehoshaphat**, as under David (2 Sam. viii. 16, xx. 24).

4[a]. The commander-in-chief is **Benaiah**, as in ii. 35. But here we cannot ignore the surprising variation of the LXX (ii. 46[h]), which makes Benaiah still captain of the guard, and names 'a son of Joab' as commander-in-chief. It is barely possible that this represents the distribution of offices at an early period of Solomon's reign, if we assume that the appointment mentioned in ii. 35 was not made immediately on the death of Joab, which it must be confessed is little probable.

4[b] is a particularly stupid interpolation (after 2 Sam. viii. 17), absolutely irreconcileable with ii. 35.

5[a]. **over the officers**: or governors; see on verse 7 below.

5[b]. Render, **and Zabud . . . , a priest, was the king's friend,** unless we are to follow the LXX and omit 'priest' entirely. The duties of this functionary (cf. 2 Sam. xv. 37, xvi. 16) are quite unknown to us. The office is mentioned in the Tel-Amarna tablets as familiar in the petty courts of Palestine in the fifteenth century B.C. (see *KIB*, v. p. 215). Cf. also Maspero, in *Records of the Past*[2], ii. p. 18.

6[a]. **over the household**: superintendent of the palace, or major-domo.

Adoniram (abbreviated to 'Adoram') still occupied the office at Solomon's death (xii. 18).

6[b]. **the levy** (Heb. *mas*) is a collective noun denoting labour-bands raised under the system of the *corvée* or forced labour, which apparently was introduced by David (2 Sam. xx. 24), but enormously extended by Solomon for the execution of his public works (cf. verse 27 f., ix. 15, and Exod. i. 11; Judges i. 28). The word is supposed to be borrowed from Egyptian.

iv. 7–19. *List of Provincial Governors.* The country was

officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: each man had to make pro-
8 vision for a month in the year. And these are their
9 names: Ben-hur, in the hill country of Ephraim: Ben-deker, in Makaz, and in Shaalbim, and Beth-shemesh,
10 and Elon-beth-hanan: Ben-hesed, in Arubboth; to him
11 *pertained* Socoh, and all the land of Hepher: Ben-abinadab, in all the height of Dor; he had Taphath the

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divided into twelve administrative districts—nine west, and three east of the Jordan—under as many Collectors or Prefects, each of whom was charged with the provision of the royal table for one month in the year. The system seems to have been instituted by Solomon; and it is noteworthy, as illustrating the centralizing tendencies of the monarchy, that in the division of the country the tribal boundaries are mostly ignored. The high rank and responsibility of the officers is shown by the fact that two of them are expressly said to have been sons-in-law of the king. The list is very confused and incomplete.

7. The word for **officers** (*nizzābîm*) occurs only in the history of Solomon, but a closely allied form (*nĕṣîb*) is occasionally found in the same sense elsewhere. It means 'appointed.'

8. *First District*, **the hill country of Ephraim,** administered by a certain **son of Hur.** It is noticeable that all the officers are mentioned by their patronymic, the personal name being sometimes inserted and sometimes omitted.

9. *Second District*, on the west side of the Judaean mountains; where **Shaalbim** may be *Selbīt*, in the ancient territory of Dan (Joshua xix. 42); **Beth-shemesh** is certainly *'Ain Shems*, on one of the roads from Jerusalem to Jaffa. A place **Makaz** is not known. **Elon** and **Beth-hanan** are *two* places; the former was also in Dan (Joshua xix. 43); the latter has been conjecturally localized far to the south, at *Beit Hanūn*, a few miles north-east of Gaza.

10. *Third District*, in the south of Judah, more central than the second, including **Arubboth** (unknown) and **Socoh,** which is one or other of two villages bearing the modern name of *Shuweikeh*. The northernmost, in the *Wadi es-Sunt*, is too near Beth-shemesh; hence the other, lying about ten miles south-south-west of Hebron, is most probably the place here meant. **Hepher** is mentioned in Joshua xii. 17 as the seat of a Canaanitish kingdom, presumably in this same region.

11. *Fourth District*, allotted to a son-in-law of Solomon, was in the rich undulating Plain of Sharon—**the high land of Dor** (= *Tantura* on the coast)—between Carmel and the sea.

daughter of Solomon to wife: Baana the son of Ahilud, 12
in Taanach and Megiddo, and all Beth-shean which is
beside Zarethan, beneath Jezreel, from Beth-shean to
Abel-meholah, as far as beyond Jokmeam: Ben-geber, 13
in Ramoth-gilead; to him *pertained* the towns of Jair
the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead; *even* to him
pertained the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, three-
score great cities with walls and brasen bars: Ahinadab 14
the son of Iddo, in Mahanaim: Ahimaaz, in Naphtali; 15

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12. *Fifth District*, falling to **Baana the son of Ahilud** (a brother of the 'recorder'?—see verse 3); it takes in the Plain of Esdraelon, where **Taanach** and **Megiddo** (*Lejjūn*) are situated; and also the eastern extension of that valley towards the Jordan, **beneath Jezreel** (*Zer'īn*) **from Beth-shean** (*Beisān*), as far south as **Abel-meholah. Zarethan** and **Jokmeam** have not been certainly identified.

13. *Sixth District*, most northerly of the three Trans-Jordanic districts, having its centre in **Ramoth-Gilead.** The site of this important frontier town has, unfortunately, not yet been determined (see on xxii. 3). The common identification with *es-Salt* places it much too far south for our passage; for **the region of Argob** (Deut. iii. 4, 13, 14) was in Bashan, and therefore (roughly speaking) north of a line drawn from the *Jebel Hauran* to the Lake of Galilee; but in what part of that extensive district it is to be located we do not know. The verse contains two glosses: the first ('to him . . . Gilead') is wanting in the LXX; the second ('threescore great . . . bars') is based on Deut. iii. 4, 5.

14. *Seventh District*, also east of the Jordan, with its dépôt at **Mahanaim**, which was apparently the capital of Gilead. The site is again uncertain. The most attractive identification seems that of Robinson and Buhl, who place it at *Mahné*, a few miles north-east of the town of *Ajlūn*. (But see G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.*, p. 587.)

15–17. *Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Districts.* Recrossing the Jordan, we come to **Naphtali** (next to the Sea of Galilee and the upper Jordan), **Asher** (between that and the Mediterranean), and **Issachar** (further south in the corner between the Sea of Galilee and the vale of Jezreel).

15. Ahimaaz, the only governor whose father is not named, is possibly the son of Zadok (2 Sam. xv. 27); **he also** was a son-in-law of Solomon.

he also took Basemath the daughter of Solomon to wife:
16 Baana the son of Hushai, in Asher and Bealoth:
17, 18 Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar: Shimei the
19 son of Ela, in Benjamin: Geber the son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the country of Sihon king of the Amorites and of Og king of Bashan; and *he was* the
20 only officer which was in the land. [Z] Judah and

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16. Hushai may be the friend of David (2 Sam. xv. 32, &c.). A place **Bealoth** is not known: MSS. of the LXX (B and A) read 'Maaleh' or 'Maaloth,' which has been thought to mean the 'Ladder' of Tyre (on which see *Camb. Bible* on 1 Macc. xi. 59).

18. *Eleventh District*, **Benjamin**, immediately north of Jerusalem.

19. *Twelfth District*, and southernmost of the Trans-Jordanic districts, **in the land of Gad** (so we must read with the LXX), **the country of Sihon**, which latter extended 'from the Jabbok to the Arnon' (Num. xxi. 24).

and of Og king of Bashan is an incorrect gloss; Bashan is already disposed of in verse 13.

The last clause, *lit.* 'and one officer who was in the land,' gives no sense. The most facile expedient would be to read with LXX 'in the land of Judah,' taking on the first word of the next verse. But that is encumbered by several obvious difficulties. This part of the text has in any case suffered much disturbance, and it is hardly worth while to try to bring it into order.

iv. 20, 21, 24, 25. *Prosperity and greatness of Solomon's Kingdom.* The section from verse 20 to verse 28 is entirely lacking in unity, and shows signs of great textual disorder, which can partly be rectified by the help of the LXX. In that version the list of governors (7–19) is immediately followed by the description of their duties (27, 28); and this again by the account of the daily purveyance for the royal establishment (22, 23). This may be accepted as the natural and original order; and in that order the passage may probably be assigned to the same annalistic source as verses 1–19. Verses 20, 21 and 24, 25, on the other hand, are two post-redactional additions; while verse 26, though genuine, stands here out of its proper context in x. 26[1]. In the Hebrew, ch. v commences with iv. 21 of the E.V.

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[1] With regard to the position of the verses in the LXX, the facts are as follows: Verses 20, 21 are practically identical with Swete's ii. 46[a],[b] (see the note on p. 80 above); and 24, 25 with ii. 46[f],[g] (where, as here, they follow immediately on the account of Solomon's

Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and making merry.

And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the 21
River unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life. [A] And Solomon's 22
provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal; ten fat oxen, and 23
twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and gazelles, and roebucks, and fatted fowl.
[Z] For he had dominion over all *the region* on this side 24

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20. as the sand: a common comparison; see Gen. xxii. 17; Joshua xi. 4; Judges vii. 12; 2 Sam. xvii. 11, &c.

21. the River *par excellence* is, as often, the Euphrates. The closing words of the verse are inconsistent with the facts related in ch. xi; and the whole conception of Solomon's age as a halcyon period of Hebrew history appears to be late.

iv. 22, 23. *Daily provision for Solomon's table.* To be read after verse 28.

22. The 'cor' (marg.) or *homer* is estimated as approximately = 11 bushels (see Kennedy in *DB*, iv. p. 912). Kittel calculates that the quantities named would sustain 33,000 to 36,000 persons, or 3,000 to 4,000 households, and does not consider the numbers excessive.

23. The word for **fowl** (*barbûrîm*) is unknown elsewhere; but the traditional interpretation is no doubt correct.

24. on this side the River must be rendered as in the marg., 'beyond the River.' The phrase does not necessarily imply that the writer lived east of the Euphrates; for it seems to have been

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daily provision); verse 26 = ii. 46[l], being separated from 46[g] by the list of ministers corresponding to iv. 2-6. In the LXX, verse 24 occurs also in its place in the Hebrew, while 21 is partly *repeated* in ii. 46[k], and also between verses 26 and 27 of ch. x of the E. V. Verses 25 and 26 are found in LXX *only* in ii. 46. These phenomena are susceptible of a double explanation: (1) the LXX of ii. 46 might have been compiled from the present Hebrew text (including its glosses); or (2) it might have been put together at an earlier stage of the Hebrew, and afterwards used to supplement the Hebrew MSS. Possibly both processes will have to be allowed for; but the subject cannot be pursued further here.

the River, from Tiphsah even to Gaza, over all the kings on this side the River: and he had peace on all sides
25 round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon. [A]
26 And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his
27 chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his
28 month: they let nothing be lacking. Barley also and straw for the horses and swift steeds brought they unto

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the official designation in the Persian period of the Syrian satrapy, to which Palestine belonged (see Ezra iv. 17, &c.; Neh. ii. 9). It is, in any case, an indication of late date.

Tiphsah is 'Thapsacus,' the most important crossing-place in the middle course of the Euphrates, above the confluence of the Balih (Xenophon, *Anab.* I. iv.; Arrian, *Anab.* iii. 7). The name probably means 'ford,' being derived from *pāṣaḥ*, the root of the Hebrew word for 'Passover.'

The phrase **from Tiphsah . . . River** seems to be later than the rest of the verse; it is wanting in the LXX here, though occurring in ii. 46[f].

on all sides is a better reading than marg., 'with all his servants,' from which it differs but in a single Hebrew letter.

25. under his vine: cf. 2 Kings xviii. 31; Mic. iv. 4; Zech. iii. 10.

from Dan . . . Beer-sheba: the north and south extremities of the Israelitish territory: Judges xx. 1; 1 Sam. iii. 20, &c.

iv. 26. *Solomon's horses and chariots.*

forty thousand stalls . . . twelve thousand horsemen: cf. the numbers in x. 26 (= 2 Chron. i. 14), 1,400 chariots . . . 12,000 horsemen; and 2 Chron. ix. 25, 4,000 stalls . . . 12,000 horsemen. The figures probably stood originally as in x. 26, from which the notice was taken as a gloss to iv. 28. See below.

iv. 27, 28. *Tribute of the Governors.* Continuation of iv. 19, expanding iv. 7.

27. those officers: those named in verses 8–19.

all that came (or, 'had access to') **. . . table:** like the sons of Barzillai; see on ii. 7.

the place where *the officers* were, every man according to his charge.

[Z] And God gave Solomon wisdom and under- 29
standing exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And Solomon's 30
wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser 31

28. where the officers **were**: rather 'where they (i. e. the horses) were'; the cavalry being distributed at various places throughout the country; see x. 26.

iv. 29–34. *Solomon's wisdom and its world-wide fame* (=Hebrew, v. 9–14). The *greatness* of Solomon's wisdom is first celebrated (29–31), then the *forms* in which it expressed itself (32) and its *character* (33), and finally the *impression* it made on his contemporaries far and near (34). The passage can hardly have come from an ancient source. The conception of wisdom which it reveals is different from what we meet in iii. 5–28: there the practical insight and sagacity of the judge, here the literary, reflective criticism of life in general which was so largely developed in later times. That Solomon excelled in both directions is not to be doubted; but the enumeration of his wise sayings seems to presuppose an extensive Solomonic literature, such as we have in the Books of Proverbs, Job, and Canticles (see Cheyne, *Jewish Religious Life after the Exile*, p. 129). The whole tone of the section—its vague generalities, its backward look to the shadowy personages of a hoary antiquity, is unlike anything found in the contemporary documents of the Monarchy. For these reasons it is doubtful if it be even as old as the Deuteronomic compiler: more probably it is post-Exilic. The last verse suggests that the passage may have been the introduction to the story of the queen of Sheba (x. 1–13), and may come from the same source. If so, it must have been inserted at this point to introduce the embassy of Hiram, the first foreign potentate who (in the view of the editor) was attracted by the wisdom of Solomon.

29. largeness of heart: 'breadth of mind.' The Greek word used by the LXX (*chuma*) seems to have suggested Cheyne's interesting but quite unnecessary emendation; 'a mind "seething" with new ideas' (loc. cit. p. 128).

30. the children of the east. The expression is commonly applied to the Arabs of the Eastern deserts (Job i. 3; Ezek. xxv. 4, 10, &c.), also to Mesopotamia (Gen. xxix. 1); but here it may refer to the far East, especially the Babylonians. (But see Burney's note on p. 50 f.)

than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his
32 fame was in all the nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand
33 and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of
34 creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

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31. Nothing is known of the four persons named in this verse, except that they must have been famous sages of the olden time. In 1 Chron. ii. 6 they are given as descendants of Zerah son of Judah; but this does not exclude the possibility that they were really Edomites; since Edomite clans were incorporated in the tribe of Judah. Some think, but with little justification, that they may have been mythical heroes of Babylonia, identifying Ethan with the legendary Etana (Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 519). **Ethan** and **Heman** can have nothing to do with the Levitical singers of the same names mentioned in 1 Chron. vi. 33, 44 (cf. the titles of Psalms lxxxviii, lxxxix).

32. proverbs . . . songs: i. e. *gnomic* and *lyric* poetry, the two great branches of Hebrew poetic composition. The proverb (*māshāl*) was originally a comparison or simile (of which we have many examples in the older parts of the Book of Proverbs), then a gnomic saying in general. Similarly the song (*shîr*) includes all varieties of lyrical poetry.

33. he spake of trees. What is here ascribed to Solomon is neither on the one hand a scientific knowledge of Natural History, nor on the other (as late Jewish legend imagined) a knowledge of the language of the creatures, enabling him to converse *with* them. It is simply the faculty of drawing lessons for human instruction, based on observation of the vegetable and animal worlds. Note the four conventional subdivisions of the latter: beasts, birds, reptiles, fishes.

hyssop: a small wall-growing plant, greatly used in ceremonial sprinklings. The botanical species has not been certainly identified. The 'hyssop' of the Greeks (*Hyssopus officinalis*), prevalent in Southern Europe, has not been found in Palestine.

[After verse 34, the LXX inserts its notice of Solomon's marriage, and of the dowry which his Egyptian wife brought to him, the

[S] And Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto 5
Solomon; for he had heard that they had anointed him
king in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever a
lover of David. And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, 2
[D] Thou knowest how that David my father could not 3
build an house for the name of the LORD his God for

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possession of the town of Gezer: iii. 1, ix. 16; see the notes on these verses.]

v. *Preparations for the Building of the Temple.*

v. 1–12. *Preliminary negotiations with Hiram* (=Hebrew, v. 15–26). Hiram king of Tyre sends an embassy to Solomon to congratulate him on his succession; and Solomon takes the opportunity to solicit his assistance in his cherished project of building a temple to Yahweh. Hiram, himself a great builder, as well as an old ally of David, readily accedes; and agrees to furnish timber and skilled labour in return for an annual contribution of natural produce. The narrative has been revised by the compiler of Kings (verses 3–5, 7, 12), who thus early reveals his interest in all that pertained to the temple. The account in the original source (S?) cannot, however, have been materially different; though it is probable that the royal palace would be mentioned as well as the temple. The whole passage should be compared with the highly elaborated record in 2 Chron. ii. 3–16.

1. Hiram: more correctly 'Hirôm,' as in verses 10, 18 (Assyrian, *Hirummu*; Josephus, *Heirōmos*). According to the calculation of Winckler (*KAT*^{3}, p. 129), Hiram I reigned *c.* 968–935 B.C. The reckoning is based on the Chronicle of Menander of Ephesus, quoted by Josephus (*Cont. Ap.* i. 117–126, 154–160); and the result agrees fairly well with the chronology of Kings. Menander gives a legendary account of the intercourse between Hiram and Solomon, in which they try to puzzle each other with riddles, and Hiram's adviser always comes off best (*Ant.* viii. 148).

a lover of: 'friendly to.' The LXX has a strange reading of this verse: 'And Hiram sent his servants to anoint Solomon instead of David his father, for,' &c. This might have some significance as countenancing a speculation of Winckler's, that Solomon was really a vassal of Tyre; although the relation is almost reversed by the Biblical writers (see on ix. 11 ff.). That it was customary for a vassal to be anointed by his suzerain appears from the Tel-Amarna tablets (*KIB*, v. 99; see *KAT*^{3}, p. 237 f.).

3. could not build. Three reasons are given for David's not having built a temple: (1) in 2 Sam. vii he is forbidden to do so

the wars which were about him on every side, until the
4 LORD put them under the soles of his feet. But now
the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side;
5 there is neither adversary, nor evil occurrent. And,
behold, I purpose to build an house for the name of the
LORD my God, as the LORD spake unto David my
father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne
in thy room, he shall build the house for my name.
6 [S] Now therefore command thou that they hew me
cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be
with thy servants; and I will give thee hire for thy
servants according to all that thou shalt say: for thou
knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to
7 hew timber like unto the Zidonians. And it came to
pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he
rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed be the LORD this day,
which hath given unto David a wise son over this great
8 people. And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have

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because such a sanctuary was inconsistent with the primitive simplicity of the worship of Yahweh; (2) here the reason is that David was hindered by his incessant wars; (3) in 1 Chron. xxii. 8 ff., xxviii. 2 f., it is because he was personally unfit, his hands being stained with blood.

which were about him: or, 'with which they (men) surrounded him.'

4. hath given me rest: 2 Sam. vii. 1, 11. This is the true Deuteronomic standpoint: the law of the one sanctuary does not come into force until Israel has received rest from its enemies (Deut. xii. 9, 10, xxv. 19).

neither adversary: i. e. for the present; see on ch. xi.

5. Thy son . . . name: quoted from 2 Sam. vii. 13, which is apparently itself a Deuteronomic gloss on the original narrative.

6. the Zidonians: i. e. Phoenicians, who in early times were known by the name of their most important ancient city.

7. the LORD. The reading of LXX (L), 'Yahweh the God of Israel,' is more appropriate in the mouth of a foreigner. The cordiality of Hiram's response is remarkable; but it did not of course imply that he was himself a worshipper of Yahweh.

heard *the message* which thou hast sent unto me: I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. My servants shall bring them 9
down from Lebanon unto the sea: and I will make them into rafts to go by sea unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be broken up there, and thou shalt receive them: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household.
So Hiram gave Solomon timber of cedar and timber of 10
fir according to all his desire. And Solomon gave 11
Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year. [D] And the 12
LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together.

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9. the place that thou shalt appoint: no doubt Joppa (*Jafa*, still the port of Jerusalem), as is expressly said in 2 Chron. ii. 16.

11. In return Solomon pays yearly a stipulated amount of produce, whether in permanence or only during the building of the temple does not appear. This would cover both the price of the timber and the hire of labour (verse 6).

On the 'cor,' see on iv. 22. Instead of **twenty measures of . . . oil,** we must read, with LXX: 'twenty thousand baths of . . . oil.' The 'bath' was a liquid measure, equal in capacity to the 'ephah,' which was one-tenth of the 'homer' or 'cor' (approximately equivalent to nine gallons).

pure oil: 'beaten oil,' procured by pounding the olives in a mortar instead of treading them in a press: the finest kind of oil, used for the lamp of the tabernacle, &c. (Exod. xxvii. 20, xxix. 40; Lev. xxiv. 2; Num. xxviii. 5).

12. The implied connexion probably is that the successful conduct of negotiations so advantageous to Solomon was due to the Divine wisdom with which he was inspired. The first half of the verse is written by the compiler; cf. the expression **as he promised him** with Deut. i. 21, vi. 3, ix. 3, and many other instances in the Book of Deuteronomy.

made a league: 'a covenant.' In strictness this would mean

13 [S (?)] And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel;
14 and the levy was thirty thousand men. And he sent
them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a
month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home:
15 and Adoniram was over the levy. And Solomon had
threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and
fourscore thousand that were hewers in the mountains;

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a compact ratified by solemn and peculiar religious ceremonies; see Davidson, in *DB*, i. 509 ff.

v. 13–18. *The Preparation of Materials* (= Hebrew, verses 27–32). An army of 30,000 labourers is raised from all Israel, by means of the *corvée*; these are divided into three equal bands, which are sent in turn for a month each to cut trees in Lebanon. Besides these a much larger number (70,000 burden-bearers, and 80,000 quarriers, under 3,300 foremen) are set to hew stones in the hill-country of Palestine. In this way, and with the assistance of Hiram's skilled workmen, the stones and timber are made ready for the erection of the temple. (Cf. 2 Chron. ii. 2, 17, 18.) It is impossible to say for certain from what source the passage is taken: it might be either the continuation of verses 1–12, or an introduction to ch. vi, or an independent extract from the annals.

13. a levy: 'a labour band'; see on iv. 6.

out of all Israel. The statement is in direct opposition to ix. 20–22 (see on the passage), and implicitly at variance with the parallel in 2 Chron. ii. 17 f.

14. by courses: 'in relays.'

Adoniram: see on iv. 6.

15, 16. The numbers in these two verses have been suspected of exaggeration, in comparison with the more moderate figures of verses 13 f. The chronicler (who is fond of large figures) passes over the 30,000 of verse 13; and this may mean that he followed authorities in which the smaller estimate had been replaced by the larger. On the other hand, the two statements do not appear to be duplicates: the one refers to those who were sent to cut timber in Lebanon, and the other to those who laboured in the quarries at home. Nor can we say that the numbers are excessive in relation to the work to be done, when we consider the waste of life incident to the system of forced labour.

in the mountains: i. e. (probably) not Lebanon, but the hill-country of Palestine; where the limestone rock yielded good building stone, soft when first quarried, but hardening under exposure to the weather.

besides Solomon's chief officers that were over the work, 16
three thousand and three hundred, which bare rule over
the people that wrought in the work. And the king 17
commanded, and they hewed out great stones, costly
stones, to lay the foundation of the house with wrought
stone. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders 18
and the Gebalites did fashion them, and prepared the
timber and the stones to build the house.

[?] And it came to pass in the four hundred and 6

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16. See on ix. 23. For 3,300, Chron. and LXX (B) have 3,600; one officer to every fifty of the total body of labourers.

17. hewed out: 'quarried.' The stones were **costly** on account of their size.

to lay the foundation: see vii. 10.

wrought stone: (Heb. *gazîth*). There were several degrees of finish: sometimes only the four fitting surfaces were accurately squared and dressed, leaving the outer surface in the rough; very often the margins of the outer face were finely chiselled to a breadth of a few inches; and at other times the whole outer surface (with or without a depressed margin) was smoothed.

18. the Gebalites: men of Gebal, now *Jebeil*, the Byblus of the Greeks, about twenty miles north of Beirūt. Assuming the correctness of the text, these Gebalites must have been famous stone-masons of Phoenicia, specially engaged by Solomon. The LXX, however, reads a verb; and it has been thought that an otherwise unknown technical term of masonry may be the original reading: 'And Solomon's and Hiram's masons hewed them, *and provided them with borders*.'

vi. *Description of the Temple Buildings.*

The document from which this account is taken was in all probability written by a contemporary of Solomon; but is hardly likely to have belonged to the State records of the kingdom. The writer was evidently thoroughly familiar with the temple, while his descriptions of the other royal buildings (vii. 1 ff.) are so vague as to suggest that he had never seen the inside of them. Such a paper would not naturally be preserved in the palace archives: more probably its author belonged to the ranks of the priesthood. Although the general outlines are clear enough, the details are frequently quite unintelligible: this is due partly to the highly technical character of the description, but partly also to the condition of the text, which is amongst the worst preserved portions

eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's

of the O. T. Light is thrown on many points by the much more lucid description of Ezekiel's temple, which, though only an ideal, is evidently based for the most part on reminiscences of the first temple.

The passage may be divided into six sections, as follows: (1) the main structural features of the temple building, with its portico and side-chambers, 2–10; (2) the internal arrangement of the house and its decoration, 15–22; (3) description of the cherubim, 23–28; (4) the doors, 31–35; (5) the inner court, 36; and (6) chronological notices, 37, 38. Verses 1, 7, 11–14 are editorial additions; and minor glosses and interpolations are very numerous.

vi. 1. *Date of the Foundation of the Temple.* Twelve generations after the Exodus, in the second month of the fourth year of Solomon, the work was commenced. The verse is assigned to an editor on several grounds: (*a*) The Hebrew word for 'month' (*ḥōdesh*) is different from that used in the old documents (*yerah*, vi. 37, 38, viii. 2). Moreover, the practice of *numbering* the months seems to have been introduced only towards the age of the Exile. (*b*) The round number 480 (twelve generations) has been thought to belong to an artificial chronological scheme, which assigned an equal duration to the interval between the founding of the first and that of the second temple[1]. (*c*) The chronological statement of the primary document occurs in verses 37, 38 (where it breaks the connexion); it probably stood originally here, and was afterwards displaced in favour of verse 1. (*d*) The verse stands in the LXX in another and obviously unsuitable place[2].

[1] The sum of the reigns of the kings of Judah in the framework amounts precisely to 430 years; if we add the 50 years of Exile, we have a second period of 480 years from the foundation of Solomon's temple to the return from captivity. See further, Burney, p. 58ff.

[2] The LXX gives an entirely different arrangement in the end of ch. v and the beginning of ch. vi, which is here quoted in full for the sake of comparison. The order is: v. 18^{b}, vi. 1, v. 17, 18^{a}, vi. 37, 38, vi. 2. After verse 16 the LXX proceeds: 'And they prepared the stones and the timber *for three years*. [Omit vi. 1]. And they brought great costly stones for the foundation of the house, even hewn stones. And the sons [*read* builders] of Solomon and the sons [builders] of Hiram hewed them *and laid them*. In the fourth year he laid the foundation of the house of the Lord in the month Neisan and the second month. In the eleventh year, in the month Baad

reign over Israel, in the month Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD. [T] And the house which king Solomon built for the 2
LORD, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty *cubits*, and the height thereof thirty cubits. And the porch before the temple of the 3

in the fourth year: see on verses 37, 38.

vi. 2–10. *Main structural features of the building, with its porch and side-chambers.* The temple was a rectangular building, measuring sixty cubits in length (east to west), twenty in breadth (north to south), and thirty in height; these, of course, are *inside* measurements, as appears from verse 20. In front of the building (east side) was an entrance hall or porch, twenty cubits long (north to south, corresponding to the breadth of the house) and ten broad (east to west). On the other three sides (north, west, and south) there was a double wall, the intervening space (five cubits at the base) being occupied by rows of cells in three stories. Whether these chambers extended along the sides of the porch, as well as of the main building, we are not told. Nor is the thickness of the walls specified: in Ezekiel's temple the inner wall was six, and the outer five, cubits thick (Ezek. xli. 5, 9). In general appearance, the temple must have been massive rather than elegant; and this perhaps reflects the character of the Phoenician architecture, regarding which Renan says: 'The architectural principle is the hewn rock, not as in Greece the column. The wall takes the place of the hewn rock, without altogether losing the character of its original.' (Quoted by Benzinger.)

2. The **cubit** (*cubitum* = elbow, Heb. *'ammāh*), the length of the forearm, is the Hebrew unit of length. Its absolute length is not quite certainly known. Ezekiel (xl. 5, xliii. 13) speaks of two cubits, the ordinary cubit (cf. Deut. iii. 11) and another a handbreadth longer; and from 2 Chron. iii. 3 it may perhaps be inferred that the longer cubit was used in the building of Solomon's temple. It may be roughly estimated as twenty inches (see Kennedy, *DB*, iv. p. 906 ff.). The inner dimensions of the house would then be approximately 100 ft. × 33⅓ × 50.

3. the temple of the house. On the sense of this expression see below on verse 17.

[Bul], which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its parts and all its arrangements. And the house which,' &c. That the position here given to vi. 1 is impossible requires no proof; but it is by no means obvious that otherwise the arrangement is as a whole inferior to that of the Massoretic text.

house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to
the breadth of the house; *and* ten cubits was the
4 breadth thereof before the house. And for the house
5 he made windows of fixed lattice-work. And against
the wall of the house he built stories round about,
against the walls of the house round about, both of the
temple and of the oracle: and he made side-chambers
6 round about: the nethermost story was five cubits

---

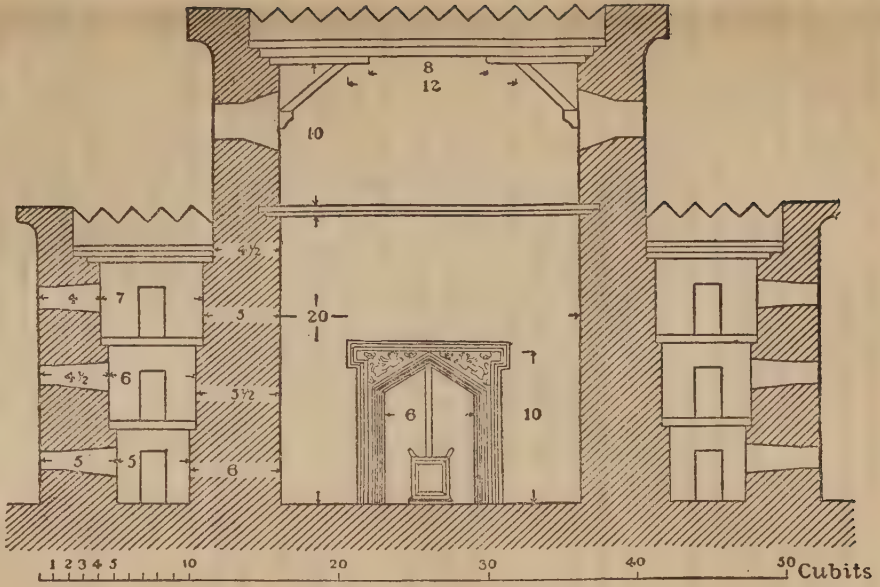
4. windows. The outer wall being lower than the inner, there was a sort of 'clerestory' of at least ten cubits deep; and in this the windows must have been placed. What is meant by the words rendered **of fixed lattice-work** remains obscure. The ancient versions seem all to have thought of apertures obliquely cut in the wall (i. e. narrowing towards the outside), and somehow closed or concealed (see marg.). The translation in the text reproduces the view of most moderns, that the windows are described as 'fitted with beams,' and 'closed' (with lattice-work) in contrast to the windows of private houses, which could be opened or closed at pleasure. Since artificial light was used in the temple, we may assume that very little light came through the windows, and that the apertures were intended more for ventilation than for illumination.

5. The meaning of the word for **stories** (*yāṣia'*, only here and verse 10) is conjectured from what follows. It is taken to denote the whole of the outer building enclosing three sides of the temple, within which were the cells to which the description immediately passes. Properly, it means 'bed' (flat surface?); and it might fairly be questioned if it has anything to do with the cells at all, though no other plausible interpretation suggests itself.

round about, against the walls of the house: omit these words, and read simply: 'round about the temple and the oracle' (so LXX (B) and (L)). On the **oracle** see on verse 16.

side-chambers: or, 'cells' (*lit.* 'ribs'). In Ezekiel's temple there were thirty such cells in each of the three stories; their use would be for storing the treasures, and gifts of all kinds of produce pertaining to a great national sanctuary.

6. the nethermost story: read with LXX, 'the nethermost cell,' or rather, 'row of cells.' The widening of the upper stories is caused by **rebatements** or contractions on the outside of the inner wall. If (as is probable) corresponding ledges were made on the inside of the outer wall, the depth of each rebatement would be half a cubit. Thus the beams which made the ceiling of the



Section of the Temple, north to south.

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broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad: for on the outside he made rebatements *in the wall* of the house round about, that *the beams* should not have hold in the walls of the
7 house. [Z] And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready at the quarry: and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard
8 in the house, while it was in building. [T] The door for the middle side-chambers was in the right side of the house: and they went up by winding stairs into the middle *chambers*, and out of the middle into the third.
9 So he built the house, and finished it; and he covered
10 the house with beams and planks of cedar. And he built the stories against all the house, each five cubits

---

lower cell and the floor of the upper were supported *on* the wall, instead of 'taking hold' of it by piercing the surface.

7. The verse interrupts the description of the cells, and is either misplaced or is an addition by a later hand.

8. To the whole complex of cells, there was but a single entrance **in the right** (i. e. 'south') **side** (*lit.* 'shoulder') **of the house.** Through this access was obtained to the 'lowest' (so we must read with LXX and Targum: see margin) tier of chambers; the higher tiers were reached by means of stairs or ladders.

winding stairs is the sense suggested by the LXX and Vulgate, which, however, seem to have read the text differently. Stade has argued forcibly that the Hebrew word denotes an arrangement of ladders and trap-doors.

9. and he covered . . .: or, 'and he roofed the house with . . . of cedar.' The words rendered **beams and planks** are obscure. They do not seem to have been in the original LXX, which reads simply, 'and he covered the house with cedar.'

10. stories: Heb. *yāṣîa'* (sing.). The last clause reads, 'and it took hold of the house by beams of cedar.' That is to say, the *yāṣîa'*, whatever it may have been, embodied precisely the structural device which was so carefully provided against in the construction of the side-chambers! (See on verse 6.) Further, the height of it is only five cubits (the word *each* is not in the Hebrew). On the common view, this of course could only be the height of a single 'story'; hence, to save that interpretation, we must either read 'fifteen cubits,' or else allow for very great looseness of expression.

high: and they rested on the house with timber of cedar.

[D] And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, 11
saying, Concerning this house which thou art in building, 12
if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgements, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I establish my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father. And I will dwell among 13
the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel.

So Solomon built the house, and finished it. [T] And 14, 15

vi. 11–14. *Divine charge to Solomon regarding the house he was building.* These verses, which are wanting in the LXX, appear to be from the hand of the compiler[1]. They are very important as revealing the religious idea of the temple, which gave it so much significance to the minds of the Deuteronomic writers. The temple is Yahweh's dwelling-place—the symbol and pledge of His gracious presence with His people Israel. That presence is conditional upon obedience to the Divine law; and it is implied that unfaithfulness to the covenant will be followed by the destruction of the temple.

12. my word . . . which: 2 Sam. vii. 12 ff.

14 appears to be a repetition of the first half of verse 9, introduced to restore the connexion which had been disturbed by the insertion of 11–13.

vi. 15–22. *The internal arrangements of the house.* This extremely confused and difficult passage describes (1) the woodwork with which the interior was lined, 15; (2) its division into two compartments, *debîr* and *hêkāl*, 16, 17, 20; (3) the altar of cedar that stood in front of the *debîr*, 20, 21; (4) disconnected statements with regard to the carving (18) and gilding (20, 21, 22) of the various parts.

The E. V. smooths over many anomalies in the Hebrew text, which is in fact utterly untranslateable as it stands. In the notes it is only possible to indicate very briefly the principal changes and excisions that have to be made; and it may be advisable to begin at once with a translation of the amended text:—

[1] Burney (p. 68 f.) adduces strong but perhaps hardly decisive reasons for regarding them as the work of the Priestly redactor.

he built the walls of the house within with boards
of cedar; from the floor of the house unto the walls of
the cieling, he covered them on the inside with wood:
and he covered the floor of the house with boards of fir.
16 And he built twenty cubits on the hinder part of the
house with boards of cedar from the floor unto the walls:
he even built *them* for it within, for an oracle, [P] even
17 for the most holy place. [T] And the house, that is,
18 the temple before *the oracle*, was forty cubits *long*. And

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'(15) And he built the walls of the house within with planks of cedar, from the floor of the house to the beams of the ceiling, covering with wood within; and he covered the floor of the house with planks of cypress. (16) And the twenty cubits at the furthest end of the house he built as a *debîr*; (17) and the *hêkāl* measured forty cubits before (20) the *debir*. And the *debir* was twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in height. And he made an altar of cedar (21) before the *debir*[1].

15. The walls of the house are lined with **boards** (*lit.* 'ribs') of cedar. Instead of **walls of the cieling**, read (with a slight change, *qôrôth* for *qirôth*) 'beams (or rafters) of the.'

16. The words **with boards . . . walls** (marg. 'beams') seem a mistaken recapitulation of part of verse 15. When these are removed we see that the following clause **he even . . . within** has been added merely to restore the lost continuity of the sentence, and must also disappear.

oracle: (Vulg. *oraculum*) is an incorrect and misleading equivalent for the Heb. *debir*, which means really the 'hinder part' of the building. It is used exclusively of the inner shrine of Solomon's temple, the place where Yahweh dwelt (cf. Ps. xxviii. 2). The later name was 'Holy of Holies,' which accordingly is here added at the end of the verse as an explanatory gloss.

17. the house, that is, the temple. The expression violates the consistent usage of the writer, in which the 'house' invariably denotes the whole building, including both the *debir* and the *hêkāl* (temple). Hence the words **the house, that is** must be omitted, and for this excision we have again the authority of the LXX. *Hêkāl* comes ultimately from the Accadian E-GAL (= great house).

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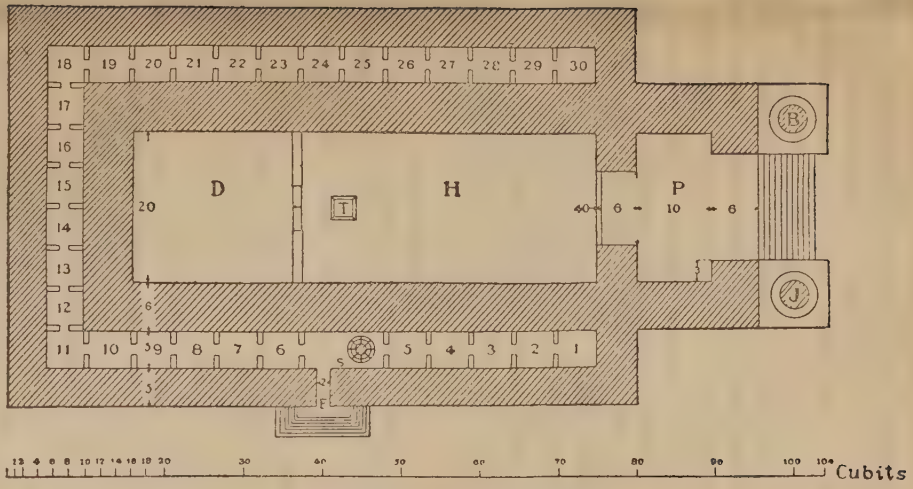
[1] The treatment of the text follows in the main that of Benzinger in his commentary. The analysis of Kittel reaches a similar result, but appears in some points less satisfying. See also Burney, p. 70 ff.



Ground Plan of Solomon's Temple.

B and J – Boaz and Jachin—the pillars. P – the porch. H – the *Hêkāl* or Holy Place. D = the *Debîr* or Most Holy Place. T – the table of shewbread. S the stairway to the upper chambers. E = entrance to the chambers. 1, 2, &c., the chambers after Ezekiel's temple.

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there was cedar on the house within, carved with knops and open flowers: all was cedar; there was no stone
19 seen. And he prepared an oracle in the midst of the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the
20 LORD. And within the oracle was *a space of* twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof; and he overlaid it with pure gold: and he covered the altar with cedar.

In the O. T. it is used sometimes of a royal palace (xxi. 1, &c.), but generally of the temple as the palace of Yahweh; and especially (as here) of the great hall (nave) of the temple as distinct from the *debîr* or inner shrine. The measurements are evidently not pedantically accurate, no allowance being made for the thickness of the partition between the two chambers. Probably the entire length exceeded sixty cubits by that small amount. In the Hebrew the verse ends with the word 'before,' stopping abruptly in the middle of a phrase, of which the continuation is found in the beginning of verse 20; verses 18, 19 must therefore be an interpolation.

18 is not in the LXX. In describing the woodwork as **carved,** it is no doubt true to the facts of a later time; the confusion arises from the attempt of a scribe to find a place for the detail in the account of what Solomon did.

knops: probably gourd-shaped bosses. See further on verse 29.

19. Although the verse is in the LXX, it must also be got rid of as an interpolation. Part of it might be retained if we were to read with the LXX, 'before the *debîr* in the midst of the house inwards.' But a still clearer connexion is obtained by omitting it entirely. It is a doublet to verse 16, written to mention the purpose of the *debîr*, viz. to receive the ark.

20. And within the oracle. To recover the connexion with verse 17 a slight alteration is necessary: 'before the *debîr*. And the *debîr* was twenty cubits,' &c. The shrine was thus a perfect cube: there must have been an unused space about ten cubits high between the cieling of the *debîr* and the outer roof.

and he covered the altar with cedar. Render with LXX, 'and he made an altar of cedar': the continuation is contained in verse 21. The **altar** is the shewbread-table (vii. 48). The transition from the name 'altar' to 'table' is shown by Ezek. xli. 22; cf. also Exod. xxv. 23 ff. The preceding clause, **and he overlaid . . . gold,** is to be deleted (see on verse 22).

So Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold: 21
and he drew chains of gold across before the oracle;
and he overlaid it with gold. And the whole house he 22
overlaid with gold, until all the house was finished: also
the whole altar that belonged to the oracle he overlaid
with gold. And in the oracle he made two cherubim of 23
olive wood, each ten cubits high. And five cubits was 24

21. The only genuine words here are **before the oracle,** which conclude verse 20. The clauses preceding are wanting in the LXX, which here preserves the original connexion. The last clause is rejected for the same reason as verse 22.

22. The repeated and disjointed statements about the plating of the house and its several parts with gold are suspected, on internal grounds, of being unhistorical. They seem to represent a mass of wealth which, though not perhaps in itself incredible, could hardly fail to be taken notice of in the records of the successive plunderings of the temple. (See, however, Burney's *Notes*, p. 73 f.) They are partly wanting in the LXX; and since in almost every instance they interrupt the description, they may probably be regarded one and all as interpolations. Hence the whole of this verse should be omitted.

vi. 23–28. *Description of the Cherubim.* The cherubim were the Hebrew modification of the composite winged figures which play so large a part in Babylonian and Assyrian art. In the O. T. they appear in two characters: (1) as guardians of sacred places (Gen. iii. 24; Ezek. xxviii); and (2) as bearers of the theophany, or sensible manifestation of Yahweh (Ezek. i; Ps. xviii. 10). Here both characters are probably combined; they are guardians of the sacred ark, and at the same time symbols of the Divine presence. There is much to be said for the opinion that originally the cherub was a personification of the thunder-cloud, which is the symbol *in nature* of Yahweh's presence (see Ps. xviii. 7–15). Unfortunately we know little about the *form* in which they were represented in the temple. All we learn is that they were (as always) winged, that they were each ten cubits high, and that they stood in the inner shrine (*debîr*), the whole breadth of which was just measured by their outstretched wings. They would thus stand ten cubits apart, the intermediate space being the destined resting-place of the ark (viii. 6, 7).

23. each ten cubits high: strictly, 'its height was ten cubits.' The sing. (without 'each') creates a difficulty, which Stade ingeniously remedies by transposing the whole of verse 26 to this place: 'two cherubim of olive wood; the height of the one

the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other were ten
25 cubits. And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the
26 cherubim were of one measure and one form. The height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it
27 of the other cherub. And he set the cherubim within the inner house: and the wings of the cherubim were stretched forth, so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the
28 midst of the house. And he overlaid the cherubim with
29 gold. And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubim and palm trees and
30 open flowers, within and without. And the floor of the

. . . cubits, and similarly the second cherub's height was ten cubits.'

24. The wings are supposed to be outstretched; and the measurement in each direction is from a single central point.

25. the other cherub was ten cubits: i. e. not in height, but in spread of wings.

26. See on verse 23.

27. within: 'in the midst of,' probably midway between the east and west walls. That the cherubim faced towards the *hêkāl* need not be said.

and the wings . . . stretched forth. Read with LXX, 'and they spread out their wings.' The rest of the description follows from what has been already said.

28. The gold-plating of the cherubim is in itself quite credible, although the statement lies under the suspicion adhering to similar notices in the chapter (see on verse 22); and the two following verses are certainly interpolated.

29. The verse hardly agrees with verse 18; on the other hand it has a close resemblance to Ezek. xli. 18. Possibly the ornamentation of the second temple may have been transferred to that of Solomon.

open flowers: or, 'garlands of flowers'; so verse 18, whence the phrase (which is wanting here in the LXX) may have been taken.

house he overlaid with gold, within and without. And 31
for the entering of the oracle he made doors of olive
wood: the lintel *and* door posts were a fifth part *of the*
wall. So *he made* two doors of olive wood; and he 32
carved upon them carvings of cherubim and palm trees
and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold; and he
spread the gold upon the cherubim, and upon the palm
trees. So also made he for the entering of the temple 33
door posts of olive wood, out of a fourth part *of the wall*;
and two doors of fir wood; the two leaves of the one 34
door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door

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within and without: perhaps, 'both of the inner and of the outer house' (Klostermann).

vi. 31-35. *The Doors.* The doors of the *debîr* were of olive wood; at the outer entrance only the posts were of olive, the folding-doors themselves of cypress. The shape of the doors is indicated, but not their size. In Ezekiel's temple the outer door was ten cubits wide (Ezek. xli. 2).

31. the lintel and **door posts were a fifth part:** an obscure expression. It might mean that the cross-section of the posts was pentagonal (see on verse 33, vii. 5). The most probable sense, however, is: 'the lintel and the door posts formed a pentagon;' meaning that the lintel, instead of being a single horizontal beam, was formed of two pieces, meeting each other at an angle. The peculiar shape may have been suggested (as Thenius thinks) by the tent, in which the ark had previously been kept.

32. So he made . . . **them:** rather, 'And on the two doors he carved.' On the carving, see verses 18, 29; on the gold-plating, see verse 22.

33. The entrance from the porch to the *hêkāl* is fitted with posts of olive wood, which are described as 'four-cornered posts' (read so with Vulgate, instead of **out of a fourth part**). That might be naturally understood of the 'cross-section' of the posts; but if the explanation given of verse 31 be correct, it is more likely to mean that the side posts with the lintel and threshold formed in this case a rectangle.

34. There were two doors of cypress wood, each divided (vertically) into two leaves.

the two leaves . . .: or, 'the one door was (composed of) two folding leaves, and,' &c.

35 were folding. And he carved *thereon* cherubim and
palm trees and open flowers: and he overlaid them with
36 gold fitted upon the graven work. And he built the
inner court with three rows of hewn stone, and a row of
37 cedar beams. In the fourth year was the foundation of
38 the house of the LORD laid, in the month Ziv. And in
the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which is the eighth
month, was the house finished throughout all the parts
thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was
he seven years in building it.

7 And Solomon was building his own house thirteen

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35. Cf. verse 32.

36. *The Inner Court.* The temple stood within an enclosure by itself (the 'upper court' of Jer. xxxvi. 10), the wall of which is here described. See further, Introductory Note to ch. vii, and on vii. 12.

and a row of cedar beams. This is the only difficult point in the description. Were the beams laid flat on the top of the stone, or did they stand upright and form a palisade? Or is it meant that *every fourth* course in the wall was a string-course of cedar beams? It is impossible to say.

37, 38. *Dates of the Commencement and Completion of the Work.* The building of the temple lasted over seven years, having been begun in the second month (see verse 1) of the fourth year, and finished in the eighth month of the eleventh year, of the reign of Solomon. On the original position of the verses, see on verse 1.

The month-names **Ziv** and **Bul** belong to the old Hebrew Calendar, which was in use down to the Exile. Only four of these names have been preserved in the O. T.—*Abib* (first month), *Ziv* (second), *Ethanim* (seventh), and *Bul* (eighth). The *numbering* of the months, on the other hand, follows the Babylonian Calendar, in which the year began with the vernal equinox, instead of in the autumn, according to the older system. **Ziv** is the 'flower month,' and corresponds to our April or May; **Bul** (Oct.–Nov.) probably means the 'rainy month.' The explanatory clause, **which is the eighth month,** betrays its character as a gloss, not only by the numeral, but also by a different word for month (*ḥōdesh*) from that used in the other two places (*yerah*).

vii. 1–12. *The Palace Buildings.*

In the LXX this section stands at the end of the chapter, following the description of the temple furniture in verses 13–51

years, and he finished all his house. For he built the 2
house of the forest of Lebanon; the length thereof was

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of the Hebrew. This seems at first sight the natural arrangement, inasmuch as it disposes of everything pertaining to the temple before proceeding to speak of other buildings. But Wellhausen has pointed out that the Hebrew order proceeds on a principle which was apt to be overlooked by later editors, but which when observed at once commends itself as original. For the description of the temple in ch. vi ends with the 'inner court': that implies an 'outer court,' to which we expect the writer to pass on. Now the 'great court' is first mentioned in verse 9 (more fully in verse 12); and the obvious inference is that it included all the buildings here enumerated, as well as the temple. We shall see presently (on verse 7) that there were in fact two inner courts, one for the temple and another for the palace. Both these, therefore, stood within the same 'great court'; and the temple had but one court peculiar to itself. That this was actually the case is confirmed in part by Ezek. xliii. 7, 8, where we read that 'only a wall' separated the dwelling-place of Yahweh from that of the kings of Judah. With regard to the situation and relative disposition of the various buildings, it is enough to say here that they appear to be taken in the order in which they would be passed by one entering the great court from the south and proceeding northwards towards the temple. See further, Appendix, Note 1.

There are in all five buildings to be considered, although only the first is described in anything like detail: (1) the House of the Forest of Lebanon, 2–5; (2) the Hall of Pillars, 6; (3) the Hall of Justice, 7; (4) the Royal Residence, 8; (5) the House of Pharaoh's Daughter, 8. Then follow (6) general statements as to the stonework, 9–11; and (7) an account of the wall of the great court, 12.

1. his own house: as 'house' in ch. vi includes both parts of the temple, so here it denotes the whole complex of palace buildings.

The **thirteen years** are reckoned, according to ix. 10, from the completion of the temple.

The last clause, **and he finished,** is transposed in the LXX to the end of the chapter (after verse 12).

vii. 2–5. *The House of the Forest of Lebanon.* The peculiar name is not of course to be taken literally, as if a summer residence in Mount Lebanon were meant. It is a poetic designation suggested by the forest-like appearance of the great hall, with its numerous pillars of cedar from Lebanon. It was by far the largest of all the buildings, measuring 100 cubits long, 50 broad, and 30 high. It is absolutely impossible to form a clear idea of the structure

an hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of
3 cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon the pillars. And it was covered with cedar above over the forty and five

from the meagre details given. As the principal feature we must imagine a spacious hall, covering no doubt the entire area, whose roof was supported by forty-five pillars in three rows of fifteen each. It is commonly supposed that over this there was an upper story; but that does not seem necessarily implied by verses 2, 3. If there was no upper story, the mention of lights and doors proves that the hall was walled in on all sides—in any case the most probable view—so that the pillars in each row would be about 10 feet, the rows themselves about 20 feet, apart. Some think that one side was open, the front being occupied by the first row of pillars; and that is quite possible, if we suppose the lights, &c., to have been those of the upper chambers. As regards the purpose of the building, all we certainly know is that some part of it was used as an armoury for the weapons of the troops (x. 17). Josephus (*Ant.* VIII. 133), says the great hall was intended to hold the concourse of people that came together for the courts of justice; and for some such public gatherings the place must surely have been constructed.

2. For he built: 'And he built.' The height (30 cubits) is not mentioned by the LXX.

upon four rows. The LXX reads 'three rows'; and this is seen from verse 3 to be correct. If the preposition **upon** can be pressed—the house built 'upon' the pillars—then certainly there was an upper story: in fact, the house *is* the upper story. But is such an expression natural? And can we lay such stress on a single particle, which moreover is wanting in Swete's LXX?

with cedar beams: LXX, 'with shoulders of cedar' (*kĕthē-phôth* for *kĕrûthôth*). This is perhaps to be preferred as the more technical and difficult reading. By 'shoulders' we are probably to understand *struts*, abutting on the pillars, and supporting the roof with triangular brackets (*s* in the fig.). These would be almost a structural necessity, and would besides enhance the forest-like appearance of the interior.

3. it was covered: or, 'lined.'

over the forty and five . . . row. Render, 'over the planks' (or, side-chambers?) 'that were upon the pillars [and the pillars were] forty-five, fifteen in each row.' The words in square brackets might easily have been dropped in a Hebrew text (so Benzinger). Now, here everything depends on whether the word *ẓêlā'ôth* is to be rendered 'planks' or 'side-chambers.' It is used

beams, that were upon the pillars; fifteen in a row.
And there were prospects in three rows, and light was 4
over against light in three ranks. And all the doors and 5
posts were square in prospect: and light was over against
light in three ranks. And he made the porch of pillars; 6
the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof
thirty cubits; and a porch before them; and pillars
and thick beams before them. And he made the porch 7
of the throne where he might judge, even the porch of
judgement: and it was covered with cedar from floor to

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in both senses in ch. vi (the former in verses 15, 16; the latter in verses 5, 6, 8). But while a *lateral* chamber might fitly be designated a *zēla'* (rib), it is difficult to think that the term is appropriate for a chamber in general, or for an *upper* chamber. We may therefore keep to the sense 'planks.'

4. The sense is hopelessly obscure. The word for **light** occurs nowhere else (supposed to be from a verb meaning 'to gaze'—places one gazes through). That for **prospects** occurs in vi. 4 ('lattice-work,' R. V.); and *might* be the plural of that similarly rendered in vii. 5. If we seek a sense suitable in all three passages, the best is perhaps 'framework.' Hence, 'there were frames in three rows, and light was over against light three times.' But no one can pretend to know what that means.

5[a]. For **posts** read, with LXX, 'lights.' 'And all the doors and lights were square in framework' (see on verse 4). Unfortunately, nothing is said of the position of the doors.

5[b] repeats 4[b] in the Hebrew: the LXX has 'doors' in place of 'lights.'

6. *The Hall of Pillars*, 50 cubits in length, and 30 in breadth. The purpose of this building can only be guessed from its position in relation to the Throne Hall, next to be described. It may have been a waiting-chamber for those engaged in lawsuits to be brought before the king. Attached to this there seems to have been an ante-chamber or porch, also furnished with pillars, and some unknown structure called an *'āb* (**thick beams:** marg. 'threshold'). The word is found again only in Ezek. xli. 25, where it is variously explained as a 'projecting roof,' a 'landing,' &c. (R. V. 'thick beams,' as here).

7. *The Throne Hall, or Hall of Justice.* The purpose is distinctly stated: **where he might judge.** The dimensions are not given: all we are told is that it was lined **with cedar from floor to floor** (perhaps we should read, as in vi. 15, 'from floor to rafters').

8 floor. And his house where he might dwell, the other
court within the porch, was of the like work. He made
also an house for Pharaoh's daughter, (whom Solomon
9 had taken to wife,) like unto this porch. All these were
of costly stones, even of hewn stone, according to mea-
sure, sawed with saws, within and without, even from the
foundation unto the coping, and so on the outside unto
10 the great court. And the foundation was of costly stones,
even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of
11 eight cubits. And above were costly stones, even hewn

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8. *The Royal Palace and the House of Pharaoh's Daughter.*

The first part of the verse should read: 'And his house in which he dwelt (in) the other court, inwards from (i. e. nearer the temple than) the Hall (of Justice), was of like construction (with the latter).' We learn (1) that of all the buildings the palace was nearest to the temple court, and (2) that it stood within a court of its own, which in 2 Kings xx. 4 is appropriately termed 'the middle court.' From Ezek. xliii. 8 we may infer that one side of this enclosure was formed by the south wall of the temple court. It is natural to suppose further that the house of Pharaoh's daughter stood within this same 'other court.'

like unto this porch ('Hall'): i. e., again, the Hall of Justice.

vii. 9–11. *Description of the stonework.*

9. All these: the buildings just enumerated.

even of . . . measure: or perhaps, 'in accordance with the measurements of hewn stone (*gāzith*)'; i. e. with the exact measurements applicable to hewn stone.

sawed with saws: the ordinary method of squaring and dressing the soft limestone of Palestine (verse 15).

within and without: dressed on all sides, the outer surface not being left in the rough, as was often done by the ancient Phœnician stone-masons (see on verse 17).

The last clause, **and so . . . great court**, gives no clear sense. Burney suggests a plausible emendation of the text, which would read: 'and from the court of the house of Yahweh unto the great court.'

10. By the **foundations** are meant the lowest course of the stonework. At the base of the retaining walls of the present Haram area are found stones of considerably larger dimensions than those here recorded.

11. The upper courses were built with smaller stones of the same character (see on verse 9) and **cedar.**

stone, according to measure, and cedar wood. And the 12
great court round about had three rows of hewn stone,
and a row of cedar beams; like as the inner court of the
house of the LORD, and the porch of the house.

And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of 13

12. *The Courts.* The whole complex of buildings, including the temple, was surrounded by an outer wall, forming the enclosure called the 'great court.' This outer wall was of the same structure as that of the 'inner court' (see on vi. 36). The second half of the verse is difficult both in grammar and in sense; and is possibly a doublet of vi. 36, after which it occurs in the LXX. With the help of the LXX, however, Burney amends the text so as to read 'round about the court of the House of Yahweh, and the court of the porch of the palace.' In this form it would stand quite appropriately in its present position.

On the site of Solomon's buildings see Appendix, Note 1.

vii. 13–51. *The Temple Implements.*

Solomon sends to Tyre for a famous brass-worker named Hiram (or Huram-abi, see on verse 13), the son of a Tyrian father and an Israelitish mother. This man comes and sets up his foundry at a spot in the Jordan valley, where he found suitable soil for his gigantic moulds (verse 46); and there he manufactured the following articles: (1) the two great pillars, Jachin and Boaz, with their ornamental chapiters, 15–22; (2) the brazen sea, with the twelve oxen on which it rested, 23–26; (3) ten portable lavers on wheeled carriages, 27–39; (4) various minor utensils, 40. We have next (5) an inventory of these productions of Phoenician workmanship, 41–47; (6) an enumeration of the golden vessels and implements of the temple, 48–50; and (7) a short notice of the depositing of the utensils, along with the treasures bequeathed by David, in the temple, 51.

There is no reason to doubt that the passage belonged to the same ancient source as the account of the buildings in vi. 2—vii. 12, to which, however, verses 47–50 may be an addition by a later hand. Some touches of style are common to the two pieces; and the peculiar arrangement is amply explained by the consideration mentioned in the Introductory Note to ch. vii. On the other hand, the abrupt mention of the summons to Huram-abi, as if it had been an afterthought, seems to show that this section was unknown to the writer of ch. v; otherwise the Tyrian workman would probably have been referred to in the preliminary negotiations with Hiram. This difficulty seems to have been felt by the chronicler, who accordingly works the mission of Huram-abi into his account of the correspondence (2 Chron. ii. 7, 13, 14).

14 Tyre. He was the son of a widow woman of the tribe of
Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in
brass; and he was filled with wisdom and understanding
and cunning, to work all works in brass. And he came
15 to king Solomon, and wrought all his work. For he
fashioned the two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high
apiece: and a line of twelve cubits compassed either
16 of them about. And he made two chapiters of molten

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vii. 13, 14.... *The Artist.*

13. Hiram: from 2 Chron. ii. 13, iv. 16 it has been inferred that his real name was *Hûram-ābi* (= 'Hûram is my father'), which was first shortened to Huram, and then changed to Hiram through a confusion with the name of the king. This is better than to suppose with Barnes (*Camb. Bible*, Chronicles, p. 148) that in these places Hiram the king calls his subject 'Huram my father,' as a title of honour.

14. According to 2 Chron. ii. 14, Huram-abi's mother was of the tribe of Dan, the tribe to which the similarly gifted Oholiab belonged (Exod. xxxi. 6). His occupation was, as usual, hereditary; and perhaps his skill also, his father before him having been a noted worker in brass.

vii. 15 22. *The great Twin-pillars, and their Chapiters.* The pillars are eighteen cubits high, and twelve in circumference (though LXX has fourteen). The thirty-five cubits of 2 Chron. iii. 15 must be an error of some scribe who added length and circumference together and included the height of the chapiters. On the position of these monuments, and their symbolic significance, see on verse 21. The textual deficiencies in the opening verses have to be remedied by the help of two parallel passages, 2 Chron. iii. 15–17, and especially Jer. lii. 21–23 (= 2 Kings xxv. 17).

15. For he fashioned: better, as LXX, 'And he cast.'

of eighteen cubits, &c. The marginal rendering, which alone is correct, reveals here a lacuna in the text; for to say that *one* pillar was eighteen cubits long and *the other* twelve cubits in circumference would be an odd way of expressing the fact that they were alike. The defect can be supplied from the LXX, which agrees with Jer. lii. 21. Read accordingly: 'eighteen cubits was the height of one pillar, and a line of twelve cubits compassed it about, and the thickness of the pillar was four finger-breadths. It was hollow; and so the second pillar.' The thickness of the metal would be about $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

brass, to set upon the tops of the pillars: the height of the one chapiter was five cubits, and the height of the other chapiter was five cubits. There were nets of 17
checker work, and wreaths of chain work, for the chapiters which were upon the top of the pillars; seven for the one chapiter, and seven for the other chapiter. So he 18
made the pillars; and there were two rows round about upon the one network, to cover the chapiters that were upon the top of the pillars: and so did he for the other

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16. The pillars are surmounted by chapiters, each five cubits high (the diameter is nowhere indicated). In the description which follows, three things are to be distinguished: (1) the chapiter itself; (2) a network which covered it; and (3) festoons of pomegranates attached somehow to the network (cf. verses 41, 42). It is extremely difficult to form any conception of the shape and general appearance of these ornaments. From verse 41 we learn that the 'chapiters' themselves were globular in form; but this, of course, does not necessarily imply that they were strictly spherical. The 'network' we may suppose to have been closely fitted to the surface of the spheroids. Further, we gather from verse 42 that there were for each chapiter two chains of pomegranates, on each of which 100 apples were strung: these we imagine to have hung loosely from or over the network (see below on verse 18). If the reader will think of two enormous pine-apples, with the leaves removed, he will perhaps have some notion of the form and reticulated appearance of these strange objects.

17. The verse reads in the LXX: 'And he made two nets to cover the chapiters of the pillars, even a net for the one chapiter and a net for the other chapiter.' This text is very nearly correct; only, by taking from verse 18 a clause which is out of place there, we may read instead of 'chapiters of the pillars,' 'chapiters which were on the top of the pillars,' as in the Hebrew of this verse. The phrases **of checker work** and **wreaths of chain work** are merely explanatory glosses to the rare word for **nets.** The difference between 'nets' and **seven** involves the change of only a single consonant in the Hebrew.

18. So he made the pillars is evidently wrong. The words 'pillars' and 'pomegranates' appear to have exchanged places in the verse (see marg.); hence the original opening was: 'And he made the pomegranates.' The clause **to cover . . . pillars** is a misplaced fragment of verse 17 (see on the verse above), and must therefore be omitted here. With these alterations the verse

19 chapiter. And the chapiters that were upon the top of
the pillars in the porch were of lily work, four cubits.
20 And there were chapiters above also upon the two pillars,
close by the belly which was beside the network: and
the pomegranates were two hundred, in rows round about
21 upon the other chapiter. And he set up the pillars at
the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar,

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yields a fairly good sense; but a still better is obtained by taking in a slightly modified form of 20[b] (which is wanting in the LXX). It then reads thus: 'And he made the pomegranates, and that in two rows over the one network; and the pomegranates were two hundred, in rows round about the one chapiter: and so he made for the other chapiter.' There were, then, 100 pomegranates in each row. That they were not strung tightly round the chapiter seems to follow from the interesting notice in Jer. lii. 23, which apparently means that of the 100 pomegranates, ninety-six 'hung free.' That would imply that they were arranged in festoons, looped up at four points, at each of which one pomegranate was fixed.

19, 20, and **22** are hardly intelligible, and are probably nothing but a congested mass of marginal glosses. Verses 19 and 22[a] appear to be variants, and the only thing that causes hesitation in rejecting both is the statement about the **lily work,** which is too distinctive to be lightly disregarded. That the chapiters themselves were lily-shaped (verse 19) is indeed irreconcileable with verse 41. Taking 22[a] as the original form of the doublet (LXX seems to have done so), we might possibly understand it to mean that the rounded ends of the chapiters rested in borders of lily work **upon the top of the pillars.** Of the words **in the porch . . . four cubits** (which stand together in the Hebrew, verse 19) nothing whatever can be made.

Verse 20[a], so far as it is intelligible, is wholly superfluous at this point; the words **close by . . . network** represent a corrupt and untranslateable text; while 20[b] has already been incorporated in verse 21. The description was evidently meant to close with

21, where the *position* and the *names* of the two pillars are indicated. They were set up **at the porch of the temple,** no doubt one on each side of the entrance.

right and **left** mean, in accordance with usage, 'south' and 'north' respectively. An important question is whether they stood *in* the doorway, supporting the lintel of the porch, or quite clear of the building, some distance in front. A perfectly definite statement on this point is not found in the O. T.; though 2 Chron.

and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz. And upon 22

iii. 17 is perhaps in favour of the second alternative. But the mere absence of any hint that they formed part of the structure is itself significant. What weighs most strongly in favour of the other view is the fact that detached frontal pillars were a common feature of ancient sanctuaries in Western Asia and also in Babylonia. Herodotus (ii. 44) mentions two such pillars in the temple of Melkarth at Tyre; and others are known to have existed at Paphos, Hierapolis, and elsewhere. Representations of them are found on ancient coins, &c.; and on a fragment of a glass dish (of third or fourth century), discovered in Rome in 1882, there is a bird's-eye view of the temple at Jerusalem with the two pillars standing quite apart from the building (Benzinger, *Archäologie*, p. 251). See W. R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*[2], p. 208, 488; Chipiez et Perrot, *Hist. de l'Art*, iii. p. 119 ff.; Sayce, *Early Religions of Egypt and Babylonia*, p. 454, 459 f. The probability, therefore, is that the pillars stood isolated in the court, and near the entrance of the porch. The names **Jachin** and **Boaz** are to us unintelligible.

Jachin ('He shall establish,' marg., or 'Stablisher') occurs as a Divine name on a Phoenician inscription (*CIS*, i. 10; see Winckler, *KAT*[3], p. 224); and it has been pointed out that it would be the equivalent in Phoenician of the Hebrew 'Yahweh.'

Boaz is still more enigmatical; the marginal interpretation, 'In it is strength,' is very precarious. See further below.

What, now, is the significance of these objects? If, as we have just argued, they served no architectural purpose, we are almost compelled to recognize in them some symbolical or religious meaning. Perhaps the most likely view is that they were artificial imitations—translations into metal—of the sacred stones or obelisks (*maṣṣēbāh*), which appear to have been an indispensable part of the equipment of an ancient Semitic sanctuary. Originally these stones were regarded as the abode of the divinity; and long after that primitive stage of religion had been outgrown, they retained their place as symbols of his presence. That the pillars might have this significance is shown by the statement of Herodotus (ii. 44) that at Tyre the god Melkarth was worshipped in the form of two such pillars. Still more instructive would be the fact that, according to Sayce, the twin pillars of Babylonian temples represented two gods; one of whom was Tammuz, and the other was called Nin-gis-zida, which Sayce renders 'The lord of the firmly-planted stake.' He considers that Jachin is a very passable translation of Nin-gis-zida; and suggests that Boaz may be a corruption of Tammuz (loc. cit., p. 460). Kittel throws out the conjecture that the mysterious names may have been those of two

the top of the pillars was lily work: so was the work of
23 the pillars finished. And he made the molten sea of ten
cubits from brim to brim, round in compass, and the
height thereof was five cubits: and a line of thirty cubits
24 compassed it round about. And under the brim of it
round about there were knops which did compass it, for
ten cubits, compassing the sea round about: the knops

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ancient mazzēbās which had stood from time immemorial on the site now occupied by Solomon's temple. It is more probable that their introduction was a purely conventional imitation of Phoenician and Babylonian sanctuaries. Whether any special symbolism was embodied in the 'chapiters' is a question that has hardly been considered by commentators; yet it is extremely unlikely that their curious design was in its origin merely decorative. W. R. Smith argued with amazing ingenuity and erudition for the theory that they had the form of *cressets*, and that one of them was used for burning the fat of the sacrifices, that in fact this was the only brazen altar of the temple prior to the time of Ahaz (*Rel. of Sem.*[2], Note K). But that view is attended by many difficulties, and has found little support. (See below on verse 41.)

vii. 23-26. *The Brazen Sea.* (Cf. 2 Chron. iv. 2-5.) This was a huge circular basin, measuring ten cubits in diameter and five in depth, and said to have been capable of containing 2,000 baths. It was richly ornamented; and the casting of it must have been an even greater triumph of the founder's art than that of the pillars. It was supported on the backs of twelve brazen oxen, which stood facing outwards, three towards each cardinal point of the compass.

23. from brim to brim: i. e. in diameter, probably the inside measurement.

a line of thirty cubits. The proportion of circumference to diameter is not mathematically exact: the LXX has 'thirty-three cubits,' which is too much.

24. knops: see vi. 18. The word is connected with that for 'gourds'; but whether it was the fruit or the flowers (colocynth flowers) that was imitated in the ornamentation is uncertain.

for ten cubits. The marginal rendering, 'ten in a cubit,' is grammatically inadmissible; but the phrase is very perplexing. Stade thinks that a scribe intended to write the circumference from verse 23, but by mistake inserted the diameter instead.

compassing . . . about: is wanting in LXX (B), and perhaps better omitted as a variant of the preceding clause.

were in two rows, cast when it was cast. It stood upon 25
twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three
looking toward the west, and three looking toward the
south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea
was set upon them above, and all their hinder parts were
inward. And it was an handbreadth thick; and the brim 26
thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, like the
flower of a lily: it held two thousand baths. And he 27

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cast when it was cast: i. e. in one mould with the basin, unlike the ornaments of the chapiters of the pillars.

26 precedes **25** in the LXX—an order which at once commends itself as natural. The thickness of the casting was **an handbreadth,** =four finger-breadths (verse 15), or about three inches.

like the brim of a cup, like the flower of a lily: i. e. widening towards the surface.

two thousand baths: 2 Chron. iv. 5 has 3,000; but even the lower number seems exaggerated. Taking the bath as sixty-five pints (Kennedy, *DB*, iv. p. 912), it would amount to about 16,250 gallons, whereas the sea, even if it had been cylindrical, would not have held more than 11,000 gallons. Probably 1,000 baths would have been near its actual capacity.

The 'sea' was to stand in the south-east portion of the temple court (verse 39). As to its use or meaning, nothing whatever is said in this account; and though the chronicler (2 Chron. iv. 6) explains that it was used by the priests to wash in, it remains highly probable that (like the pillars) it was copied from Phoenician or Babylonian models, and had originally some symbolic significance. Kosters (*Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1879, p. 455 ff.) seems to have been the first to suggest that it expressed a cosmological idea, being a representation of the World-ocean (*Tĕhôm*), out of which, in the Babylonian Creation-Epos, Marduk formed the habitable world, after a conflict with the Dragon (*Tî'āmāt*), the mythological personification of the primaeval chaos. That theory still lacks conclusive evidence; but it derives some support from the fact that in the temple of Marduk in Babylon there was an artificial sea (*ta-am-tu*), along with a dragon (*KIB*, iii. p. 143). In Solomon's temple the dragon is suppressed, but the sea remains to symbolize perhaps Yahweh's power over the ocean, a theme frequently dealt with in the poetic mythology of the O. T. (See further, Sayce, *Early Religions of Egypt and Babylonia*, p. 458 f.; Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos*, p. 27 f., 153; Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 653).

vii. 27–39. *The Ten Lavers with their wheeled Carriages.* These

made the ten bases of brass; four cubits was the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth thereof, and

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were to stand five on the north and five on the south side of the temple building (verse 39). According to 2 Chron. iv. 6, they were for washing things pertaining to the burnt-offering; this appears to imply that they were employed to convey water from the sea to the great altar. Whether the statement is historically accurate, or whether in addition to their utilitarian purpose the vessels had also a symbolic meaning, we cannot at present determine. Kosters, following out his conception of the symbolism of the brazen sea, regards them as emblems of the clouds, the carriers of the upper waters of the firmament (Gen. i. 6, 7).

The description of these articles is the most difficult part of the chapter; and we have no means of controlling the extremely confused text by comparison with parallel passages. The problem has been considerably simplified by the recent discovery at Larnaka (in Cyprus) of a miniature specimen of the apparatus here described. It is a small bronze carriage (about 15 inches high, and 9 square) mounted on four wheels, the square upper frame supporting a cylindrical ring, which was adapted to receive a rounded vessel. (A reproduction will be found in Burney's *Notes*, p. 91.) Its size is thus only about one-ninth of the huge erections we are now to consider; but it evidently represents the class of implements to which they belong, and is at present the best guide we have to the construction and appearance of the laver-carriages of the temple. Before this discovery most writers found it necessary to distinguish *three* main parts of the structure: (1) the carriage proper (*mĕkônāh*), mounted on wheels; (2) an upper framework (*kĕn*), resting on the *mĕkônāh*, and carrying a circular rim, in which stood (3) the laver itself (*kiyyôr*). Now the Larnaka model has no room for the second framework; and it is improbable that it ever existed except in the imagination of commentators. Of course, the textual facts which led to its being postulated remain. But Stade has shown, by a renewed examination of the passage (*ZATW*, 1901, p. 145-92), that the details of the description can all be explained by the newly discovered implement, on the assumption that some of the principal parts *are described twice over*; in other words, that the passage before us has been produced by the interweaving of two independent and slightly divergent accounts of the same objects. In the Notes that follow Stade's reconstruction is in the main adhered to, though hesitation is expressed with regard to one or two points of detail.

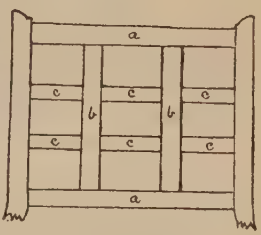
27 presents no difficulty. It gives the dimensions of the carriage in which the laver was set, 4 cubits in length and breadth,

three cubits the height of it. And the work of the bases 28
was on this manner: they had borders; and there were

---

and 3 in height. The measurements of the LXX (5 cubits long, by 4 broad, and 6 high) are erroneous. The word for **base** (*mĕkônâh*) might be better rendered 'stand.' The same word (*makânat*) is said to be found on Minaean inscriptions in Arabia, designating a framework for supporting a laver (Hommel, in *Explorations in Bible Lands*, p. 750).

28. The carriage (base) must obviously have been constructed with four corner-posts, connected, on each of the four sides, by two or more transverse bars. But whether these essential parts of the framework are denoted by the **borders** (*miṣgĕrôth*) and **ledges** (*shĕlabbîm*) of this verse is doubtful: they might be mentioned merely for the sake of the ornamentation upon them (to be described in the next verse). A word similar to *shĕlabbîm* is used in the Talmud of the steps of a ladder; hence it would naturally mean here 'cross-pieces'; whether the cross-pieces were upright or horizontal will depend on the position assigned to the *miṣgĕrôth*. We may look first at Stade's interpretation. The *miṣgĕrôth* he explains, after the analogy of the 'border' of the shewbread table of the tabernacle (Exod. xxv. 25, 27), as narrow horizontal plates of metal extending between two posts, and forming the upper and lower bars of the frame (*a*, *a* in the figure). Taking these as the two sides of the ladder, the cross-pieces (*shĕlabbîm*) are an undefined number of vertical pieces (*b*, *b*) uniting the upper and lower bars. Finally, he supposes a second set of *miṣgĕrôth* (*c*, *c*, *c*), those, namely, which are said in this verse and the next to be **between the ledges** (*shĕlabbîm*). One objection to this view is that, judging from 2 Kings xvi. 17, the *miṣgĕrôth* must have been structurally unimportant, since Ahaz seems to have removed them without material injury to the fabric. Partly for this reason, other writers prefer the sense 'panels' for *miṣgĕrôth* (see R. V. marg.), taking the *shĕlabbîm* to be either the corner-posts or the whole metal framework, whose intervals are conceived as fitted with thin plates of brass. So far as verse 28 is concerned, that would be a satisfactory explanation; but it leads to confusion when we attempt to carry it through the following verses (see verses 31, 32). On the whole, therefore, Stade's construction is to be preferred; unless we were to assume that the word *miṣgĕrôth* occurs in two



29 borders between the ledges: and on the borders that
were between the ledges were lions, oxen, and cherubim;
and upon the ledges there was a pedestal above: and
beneath the lions and oxen were wreaths of hanging work.
30 And every base had four brasen wheels, and axles of
brass: and the four feet thereof had undersetters: be-
neath the laver were the undersetters molten, with wreaths

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different senses in the two parallel accounts. Stade himself hints at this as a possible solution, pointing out that in verse 36 (which is obviously the parallel to verse 29) the word *lûhôth* (**plates**) might be the equivalent of the *miṣgĕrôth* of verses 28, 29. But he justly observes that such a divergence in the use of a technical term is not probable. An excellent suggestion (though it accentuates the difficulty referred to above) has been made by Burney. Substituting *shĕlabbîm* for *miṣgĕrôth* at the beginning, he renders: 'They had (upright) supports, and there were border-frames between the supports.' Besides removing a grammatical irregularity, this construction has two distinct advantages: (*a*) it introduces the important corner-posts into the description; and (*b*) it gets rid of Stade's second set of *miṣgĕrôth* altogether.

29. The 'borders' between the supports, as well as the supports themselves, were decorated with figures of lions, oxen and cherubim. Ornamentation of a similar character is seen on the Larnaka model.

and upon the ledges.... Render (inserting 'and' with the LXX): 'and upon the supports likewise; and above and below the lions and oxen.' The following word is corrupt. Instead of **were wreaths of** we may (with Burney) read 'and cherubim,' which is necessary after 'lions and oxen,' and for **hanging work** render 'was bevelled work,' the edges of the *miṣgĕrôth* being 'bevelled in the form of steps.'

30. Each stand rested on four wheels, with axles of brass, probably one axle to each *pair* of wheels (so on the Larnaka wagon).

The **feet** of the stand would naturally mean the downward prolongations of the four corner-posts, in the ends of which the wheels were fitted. At first sight it seems equally natural to identify the **undersetters** (*lit.* 'shoulders,' marg.) with the diagonal braces represented in the model as connecting the feet with the lower bars of the framework (see on vii. 2). But in that case their number would be not four but eight. Moreover, the next phrase **beneath the laver** would require us to suppose that the 'shoulders' were braces extending inwards towards the centre

at the side of each. And the mouth of it within the 31
chapiter and above was a cubit: and the mouth thereof
was round after the work of a pedestal, a cubit and an
half: and also upon the mouth of it were gravings, and
their borders were foursquare, not round. And the four 32

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of the base of the stand, beneath the bottom of the lavers when in position. Unfortunately the closing words (rendered, **with wreaths at the side of each**), which might have thrown some light on the structure, are hardly intelligible; while apart from them the statement that 'the shoulders were cast' conveys little meaning. Stade's view of the construction is very different. He takes the **feet** to be the corner-posts as a whole, and explains the 'shoulders' as the projecting upper ends of the posts, which in the model are surmounted by figures of small birds. It has been proposed to change 'feet' to 'corners' in accordance with verse 34. The reader may choose!

31. Here at least the description certainly passes to the upper part of the stand. By the **mouth** of the stand is meant a circular ring of brass, held by the four bars of the upper frame, and rising above them to the height of one (?) cubit (see below). Its purpose was of course to receive the laver; its diameter was therefore 4 cubits (verse 38), exactly the length of one side of the square frame in which it was contained (verse 27). The word **chapiter** must be a mistake, since no chapiters are mentioned in the whole description. Stade, following Ewald, reads 'shoulders,' which suits his view of what the shoulders were, and no doubt strengthens the presumption that that view is correct. The only alternative would be to substitute 'borders,' which would give perhaps an even better sense. The numeral before **cubit** has been dropped out: we should probably insert 'one' (but see on verse 35). The beginning of the verse should thus be translated: 'And its mouth within the shoulder-pieces (?) and upward was one cubit.'

round after the work of a pedestal: i. e. made as pedestals were made; but what that means we do not know. The words **a cubit and a half** cannot be explained: they may have crept in by mistake from the next verse.

gravings. These covered the projecting part of the ring (mouth) on its outer side.

and their borders were foursquare, not round. If we might substitute 'its' for 'their,' the clause has a good sense where it stands; it reminds us that while the mouth was round, the frame in which it was set was square. But Stade is possibly right in thinking that the clause is the immediate continuation of verse 27, and that 'their' refers to the stands of verse 27. The intervening

wheels were underneath the borders; and the axletrees
of the wheels were in the base: and the height of a
33 wheel was a cubit and half a cubit. And the work of
the wheels was like the work of a chariot wheel: their
axletrees, and their felloes, and their spokes, and their
34 naves, were all molten. And there were four under-

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verses (28—'gravings' in 31) he regards as a secondary account of the laver-carriages, partly parallel to the main description (which is complete in itself) in verses 27, 31^{b}, 32–39. Another division, however, is possible, and seems equally satisfactory. Leaving 31^{b} where it stands, we might take verses 27–31, 37–39 as the main account, and verses 32–36 as the secondary parallel. In any case it is tolerably plain that verses 32–36, to which we now proceed, are a duplicate of 29-31; they describe the same objects (wheels, shoulder-pieces, mouth, ornamentation); though with differences in the details and in the terminology.

32, 33 give a fuller description of the 'wheels' than verse 30. They were **underneath the borders** (see on verse 28); i. e. their height did not reach to the lower part of the framework.

and the axletrees . . . base: perhaps, 'and the holders of the wheels were in the stand.'

axletrees is a doubtful rendering of the Hebrew word, which means *lit.* 'hand'; because we cannot tell whether the wheel revolved on the axle (like an ordinary cart-wheel), or whether the axle itself revolved in bearings (as in a locomotive); in the latter case (which is the more probable view) the 'hand' might be the ring through which the axle passed. We must understand the statement to mean that the 'hands' were in those extensions of the corner-posts of the base which were called its 'feet' in verse 30. Stade thinks that 'hands' is the technical designation of the diagonal braces mentioned in the notes on verse 30; but that is rather forced: although the hands were *in* the base, it appears from verse 33 that they belonged specially to the wheels. The height of each wheel was 1½ cubits. Neither the length of the 'feet' nor the height of the frame above the ground is anywhere specified. In the Larnaka model the height of the upper bar of the frame from the ground is nearly two and a half times the depth of the framework itself: if we suppose the proportions to have been similar in Solomon's vessels, the upper bar would have stood about 7½ cubits (12 to 13 ft.) high.

33. The construction of the wheels resembled, part for part, that of a chariot-wheel; only, 'the whole was foundry-work.'

axletrees: 'holders,' as before.

setters at the four corners of each base: the undersetters thereof were of the base itself. And in the top of the 35
base was there a round compass of half a cubit high: and on the top of the base the stays thereof and the borders thereof were of the same. And on the plates of the stays 36
thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, according to the space of each, with wreaths round about. After this manner he made 37

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34. undersetters: 'shoulder-pieces,' see on verse 30.

at the four . . . base might be rendered, 'for the four corner-pieces of one stand.' The word for **corners** (*pinnôth*) here replaces that for 'feet' (*pĕ'āmôth*) in the parallel account (verse 39), and being equally vague in meaning leaves the same uncertainty as to where the shoulder-pieces were. The last clause may be read: 'The shoulder-pieces were part of the stand'; either cast in one piece with it, or rigidly attached.

35. See above on verse 31. In the first clause the subject is omitted in the original; we must insert either 'mouth' or 'pedestal,' in accordance with verse 31 (so Stade), and render: 'And in the top of the stand there was a mouth (pedestal), half a cubit in height, circular round about.' The height given is only half of what was taken to be the original text of verse 31. Perhaps it should be 'a cubit and a half.' The remainder of the verse defies reasonable explanation. Stade thinks the last words, **the stays** ('hands') **thereof . . . same,** belong to the parallel account, and finds a place for them in verse 30 after **axles of brass:** but the difficulty is not appreciably lessened by this transposition.

36 appears to be the parallel to verse 29. So far as it can be translated, it reads: 'And he engraved on the plates cherubim, lions, and palm trees.' The words omitted, **of the stays thereof,** and **on the borders thereof,** are due to a mistaken repetition from the line above; the end of the verse, **according to the space . . . about,** may be corrected in accordance with verse 30, and translated: 'with wreaths at the side of each.'

plates (*lûḥôth* = tablets) is probably a comprehensive designation of the flat surfaces on the side of the stand, including both the *miśgĕrôth* and the *shĕlabbîm* of verse 29: on the possibility that they might be 'panels,' see on that verse. It is true that the ornamentation differs from that of verse 29 by the substitution of palm-trees for oxen; but the discrepancy hardly requires us to refer the descriptions to two different objects.

the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure,
38 and one form. And he made ten lavers of brass: one
laver contained forty baths: and every laver was four
cubits: and upon every one of the ten bases one laver.
39 And he set the bases, five on the right side of the house,
and five on the left side of the house: and he set the sea
on the right side of the house eastward, toward the south.

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37. The description given applies to all the ten stands; they are uniform in every respect.

and one form: omitted by LXX.

38. To each stand a circular laver is made, fitting the mouth-piece on the top, 4 cubits in diameter, and capable of holding 40 baths (about 375 gallons) of water.

39. See introductory note to verses 27 ff.

We conclude the somewhat intricate exposition of this section with a continuous translation of the text as amended, disentangling the two parallel accounts in separate columns:—

(27) And he made the stands, ten in number, of brass; one stand was four cubits in length, four cubits in breadth, and three cubits in height. (28) And the construction of the stand(s) was as follows: they had upright supports; and borders between the supports.

(29) And on the borders that were between the supports were lions, oxen, and cherubim, and upon the supports in like manner; and above and below the lions and oxen and cherubim was bevelled work. (30) And for one stand there were four wheels of brass, with axles of brass; and its four feet had shoulder-pieces underneath the laver (?). (31) And its mouth-piece within the shoulder-pieces (? borders) and upward was one cubit; and its mouth-piece was circular, after the workmanship of a pedestal: and upon its mouth-piece also were gravings; but its (?) borders were square, not round.

(32) And the four wheels were underneath the borders; and the holders of the wheels were in the stand: and the height of one wheel was one and a half cubits. (33) And the make of the wheels was like the make of a chariot wheel: their holders, and their felloes, and their spokes, and their hubs, all was foundry-work. (34) And there were four shoulder-pieces for the four corners of one stand: its shoulder-pieces were part of the stand. (35) And in the top of the stand was a mouth-piece, half a cubit in height, circular round about. (36) And he engraved on the plates cherubim, lions, and palm-trees, with wreaths at the side of each.

And Hiram made the lavers, and the shovels, and the 40
basons. So Hiram made an end of doing all the work
that he wrought for king Solomon in the house of the
LORD: the two pillars, and the two bowls of the chapiters 41
that were on the top of the pillars; and the two networks
to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that were on the
top of the pillars; and the four hundred pomegranates 42
for the two networks; two rows of pomegranates for each
network, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that
were upon the pillars; and the ten bases, and the ten 43
lavers on the bases; and the one sea, and the twelve 44

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(37) Thus he made the ten stands: all of them had one casting, and one measure. (38) And he made the ten lavers of brass, &c.

vii. 40. *The Smaller Utensils.*

For **lavers** read (with LXX and parallel passages) 'pots.' (Cf. verse 45.)

shovels: utensils for cleaning the altar (Exod. xxvii. 3, &c.).

basons: used in the sacrificial ritual for catching the blood and dashing it on the altar.

vii. 41–47. *Inventory of Huram-abi's Works.* The list on the whole corresponds with the preceding detailed descriptions; but there are peculiarities of phraseology which go to show that the passage is taken from an independent but ancient and valuable source. This conclusion is confirmed by an important addition of the LXX in verse 45, which appears to have been omitted by the Hebrew in order to bring about perfect harmony with what has gone before.

41. the two bowls of the chapiters are doubtless the two chapiters themselves (as distinct from the ornamental network); but this is the only place where we are informed that they were *globular* in shape. The word (*gullāh*) ordinarily means 'bowl' in Hebrew; but in Assyrian it is said to be used of the rounded ornament of a pillar (Jensen, *ZA*, IX. p. 133); and this is no doubt the sense here. W. R. Smith held that the chapiters were really bowl-shaped cressets, with the network stretched over their open mouths like the grating of an altar-hearth; and argued that they were originally intended for burning the fat of the sacrifices (see above, p. 126, and *Rel. of Sem.*[2], Note K).

42. The close of the verse, **to cover . . .**, is perhaps a repetition of the similar words of verse 41.

45 oxen under the sea; and the pots, and the shovels, and
the basons: even all these vessels, which Hiram made
for king Solomon, in the house of the LORD, were of
46 burnished brass. In the plain of Jordan did the king
cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and
47 Zarethan. And Solomon left all the vessels *unweighed*,
because they were exceeding many: the weight of the
48 brass could not be found out. And Solomon made all
the vessels that were in the house of the LORD: the

45. After **house of the LORD,** LXX continues: 'and the forty-eight pillars of the house of the king and of the house of the Lord: all the works of the king did Hiram make entirely of brass.' Although we have no mention elsewhere of brazen pillars in the palace or the temple, the words are probably genuine; a certain irregularity in the Hebrew text points to an omission. The next four or five verses are in some disorder: see at the close.

46. Huram-abi's foundry was in the Jordan valley, the nearest place probably where clay suitable for the great moulds could be found. (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.*, p. 488.)

For **the king** read 'he' (LXX); the subject of the sentence being obviously Huram-abi.

in the clay ground: *lit.* 'in the thickness of the soil' (so LXX); but the text is doubtful. It is perhaps better to amend and read with Moore (*Judges*, p. 212 f.) and Benzinger: 'at the ford of Adamah.' Adamah, 'the city beside Zarethan' (Joshua iii. 16), is probably the modern *ed-Damieh*, on the west bank of the Jordan, twenty-four miles from its mouth. **Succoth** is on the other side of the river (Gen. xxxiii. 17; Joshua xiii. 27; Judges viii. 4, 5). A good road for the transport of the vessels to Jerusalem was essential; and this was secured by choosing a situation near one of the principal crossing-places of the Jordan.

47. The quantity of brass consumed was so great that no attempt was made to keep a record of its weight.

vii. 48–51. *The Golden Utensils for the Interior of the Temple.* The passage is usually regarded by critics as a late addition to the original account of the temple furniture. The chief arguments for this opinion are: (*a*) the improbability of so lavish an expenditure of gold on articles like hinges, &c.; (*b*) the mention of a golden altar within the temple, of which there is no historical evidence in pre-Exilic times; (*c*) the discrepancy between verse 48 and vi. 20 ff., where the name 'altar' is applied to the shewbread table, and no other altar is spoken of. It is urged that if all these articles had

golden altar, and the table whereupon the shewbread
was, of gold; and the candlesticks, five on the right side, 49
and five on the left, before the oracle, of pure gold; and
the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, of gold; and 50
the cups, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the
spoons, and the firepans, of pure gold; and the hinges,
both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy
place, and for the doors of the house, *to wit*, of the

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been inside the temple, the proper place to mention them would have been in ch. vi, along with the cherubim and the altar of cedar. (*d*) It excites suspicion that the vessels are merely enumerated, without any description of their appearance or mention of their maker, a reticence which is doubly surprising in contrast with the elaborate account of the brazen vessels made by Huram-abi. These considerations are perhaps sufficient to show that the verses do not belong to the document from which the previous descriptions are taken. At the same time, the use of the word *dĕbîr*, and the mention of ten candlesticks (as contrasted with the one candelabrum of the tabernacle and the second temple), proves that the account rests on some knowledge (whether personal or traditional) of the arrangements of the pre-Exilic temple. It is probable, in short, that such articles did exist in Solomon's temple; though it is doubtful if they were made by Solomon. Cf. 2 Kings xii. 13, xxv. 14 ff.; Jer. lii. 18 ff.

48. the golden altar is the altar of incense, which stood within the tabernacle (Exod. xxx. 1 ff., xxxix. 38) along with the **table** for the **shewbread** (*lit.* 'bread of the presence,' Exod. xxv. 23 ff.). That the latter institution was ancient is known from 1 Sam. xxi. 4 ff.; the incense altar, on the contrary, is unknown in pre-Exilic history, and is not mentioned even by Ezekiel. It occurs first in secondary strata of the Priestly Code (Exod. xxx, xxxix); and of course existed in the second temple (1 Macc. i. 21, iv. 49 f.).

49. the candlesticks (rather, 'lampstands') stood **before the oracle** (*dĕbîr*); i. e., apparently, along the partition-wall, five on each side of the door. These candlesticks are nowhere else mentioned except in Jer. lii. 19 and 2 Chron. iv. 7, 20 (but cf. xiii. 11), and 1 Chron. xxviii. 15 (where *silver* candlesticks are spoken of along with them). Elsewhere we read of only one candlestick with seven lamps (represented, as is well known, on the Arch of Titus). The writer, therefore, cannot have drawn his information from post-Exilic times.

the flowers are the flower-like ornaments of the candlesticks, in which the lamps rested (see Exod. xxv. 31 ff.).

51 temple, of gold. Thus all the work that king Solomon wrought in the house of the LORD was finished. And Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated, *even* the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, and put them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

8 [S] Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel,

51. The work being completed, Solomon brings the consecrated gifts of his father David, and deposits them in **the treasuries** (perhaps the side-chambers) of the new sanctuary.

the things . . . dedicated: *lit.* 'the sacred things of David his father.'

The **vessels** (or 'weapons'?) might include shields and other trophies of victory, tribute-gifts, &c., such as we read of in 2 Sam. viii. 7 ff. : verse 11 says expressly that they were dedicated to the Lord.

The text of verses 46–51 is hardly in its original condition. The LXX gives a better sequence by transposing verses 46 and 47; and has a much superior reading of the first half of verse 47. The words 'And Solomon left,' which most naturally mean 'And Solomon deposited,' and cannot possibly be translated 'left unweighed,' are transferred in LXX (L) to the beginning of verse 48, where they find a suitable context. (See the exhaustive Note of Burney, p. 99 ff.) Making these changes, and omitting verses 48^b 50 as a gloss, the close of the passage reads as follows :—

'(47) There was no weight to the brass which he (i. e. Huram-abi) made into all these vessels, because it was very great: the weight of the brass was not ascertained. (46) In the plain of Jordan did he cast them, at the ford of Adamah between Succoth and Zarethan. (48) And Solomon deposited the vessels which he had made in the house of Yahweh. (51) Thus all the work that Solomon wrought in the house of Yahweh was finished. And Solomon brought in the consecrated things of David his father, the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, placing them in the treasuries of the house of Yahweh.'

viii. *The Dedication of the Temple.*

In the present form of the narrative the inaugural ceremony appears as a great complex function in three acts: the removal of the ark to its new abode (verses 1–11); the orations and prayer of Solomon (12–61); and, finally, the dedicatory sacrifices and celebration of the annual festival (62–66). The critical analysis

[P] and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' *houses* of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon [S] in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is

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of the chapter, however, discloses a more profound and instructive division, by which the historical exposition of the passage must be guided. The whole section, namely, from verse 14 to verse 61, is demonstrably Deuteronomic from beginning to end, and must have been composed and inserted by the compilers of the Book of Kings. Removing this long expansion, we have left in verses 1–13 the original account of the transference of the ark, closing with the only authentic utterance of Solomon on this occasion (verses 12 f.). It is probable (though not certain) that the conclusion of this ancient narrative lies in verses 62–66. Thus we are led to the following threefold division of the chapter: (1) the old account of the ceremonies connected with the placing of the ark in the temple, verses 1–13; (2) the speeches put by the Deuteronomic writers into the mouth of Solomon, verses 14–61; (3) the account—partly ancient—of the dedicatory sacrifices and the festival, verses 62–66.

viii. 1–13. *The transportation of the Ark: Solomon's poetic Dedication.* (Cf. 2 Chron. v. 2—vi. 2.) The section has been somewhat freely interpolated, partly by the Deuteronomic compilers, but still more by a later editor, whose point of view is that of the Priestly Code. Many of these additions are wanting in the LXX, which represents (especially in the first five verses) a shorter and purer text than the Hebrew. When these are eliminated, there remains a kernel of narrative which satisfies every test of antiquity and historicity which we can reasonably apply. There is a *prima facie* probability that the long records of the building of the temple in ch. v–vii were followed by an account of its dedication; and there is no reason to doubt that the verses before us were taken from some ancient document.

1, 2. In the shorter recension of the LXX the verses read: 'Then king Solomon assembled all the elders of Israel in Zion to bring up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh from the city of David, which is Zion, in the month Ethanim.'

The **elders of Israel** are the representatives of the old tribal aristocracy—**the heads of tribes** and **princes of fathers'** houses (i. e. 'chiefs of families'), as is quite correctly explained in the gloss which follows. The terms of the gloss, however, are distinctive of the Priestly Code. The reading **Jerusalem** of the Hebrew text is preferable to the 'Zion' of LXX.

the city of David, which is Zion: (see on ii. 10). The name

2 Zion. [P] And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast, [S] in the month
3 Ethanim, [P] which is the seventh month. [S?] And all the elders of Israel came, [P?] and the priests took up

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Zion was originally restricted to the site of the Jebusite fort on the lower southern spur of the eastern hill of Jerusalem, on the higher northern plateau of which the temple now stood (note the expression 'bring up'). In later times it was extended to the temple hill generally, and eventually to the whole city.

2. On the **month Ethanim,** and the gloss **which is the seventh month,** see on vi. 37, 38.

at the feast. Throughout the O. T. *the* feast *par excellence* is the autumn festival, the 'feast of ingathering at the end of the year.' In later times it was certainly held in the seventh month (Lev. xxiii. 34 ff.; Num. xxix. 12 ff.); and in spite of xii. 32 there is no clear evidence that this was not always the custom in the southern kingdom (see the note on the verse). The time of the festival is nowhere prescribed in the pre-Exilic legislation (Exod. xxiii. 16, xxxiv. 22; Deut. xvi. 13); and the truth may be that it varied at different sanctuaries according to the season of the fruit-gathering. There is, therefore, no difficulty in supposing that the festival actually fell in the seventh month. The phrase is wanting in the LXX, and may of course be a gloss; but the fact remains that the dedication did coincide with 'the feast' (see verse 65). A more serious difficulty arises from the comparison of this notice with vi. 38. If the temple was not finished till the eighth month, how could the dedication take place in the seventh? The simplest explanation, though critics are slow to entertain it, is that the dedication was postponed to the year following the completion of the house (so Farrar, i. p. 167). It is quite conceivable that vi. 38 refers only to the building, and that Huram-abi's works were not ready till some months later. Kittel, who assigns vi. 2—vii. 12 and vii. 13–51 to different sources, holds that viii. 1–13 is the continuation of the latter, which he supposes to have followed a different tradition as to the date of the completion of the temple from vi. 38. That is not a probable view, because ch. viii presupposes a knowledge of ch. vi but not of vii. 13 ff. As a last resource it is proposed (Stade, Benzinger, &c.) to delete the phrase 'in the month Ethanim' as a gloss, and retain 'at the feast,' with the understanding that the feast was observed in ancient times in the eighth month. But that is a very arbitrary proceeding, in view of the pre-Exilic phraseology of the clause.

3, 4. Here again the text shows unmistakeable traces of post-Exilic redaction. First of all, the statement that the Tent of

the ark. [S?] And they brought up the ark of the LORD, 4
[P] and the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels
that were in the Tent; even these did the priests and
the Levites bring up. [S] And king Solomon and all 5
[P] the congregation of [S] Israel, [P] that were assem-
bled unto him, were with him [S] before the ark, sacri-
ficing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor num-
bered for multitude. And the priests brought in the ark 6
of the covenant of the LORD unto its place, into the oracle
of the house, [P] to the most holy place, [S] even under

Meeting and its vessels were brought up to the temple along with the ark cannot be historical. The sources of Kings know of no sacred tent except that made by David for the ark (see on i. 39); but this is never called 'Tent of Meeting,' and would hardly have been thought worthy of being transported to the new sanctuary. The Tent of Meeting can mean nothing else than the tabernacle 'which Moses made in the wilderness' (1 Chron. xxi. 29), which late writers like the chronicler supposed to be still in existence in the time of Solomon. Hence that whole clause, although it is found in the LXX, must be removed. Similarly, the distinction between **priests** and **Levites** in the end of verse 4 implies the standpoint of the Priestly Code (see Driver, *Deut.* p. 219); and this clause also must be omitted, as in the LXX. What now remains of the two verses consists of two doublets: (*a*) 'And all the elders of Israel came and brought up the ark of Yahweh'; and (*b*) 'And the priests took up (*or*, carried) the ark.' It is difficult to say which of these represents the original text. The LXX retains only (*b*); yet, on internal grounds, we are disposed to regard (*a*) as the better reading. We may suppose (*b*) to have been a marginal correction to remind the reader that the ark must have been actually carried by priests; and the LXX translators, recognizing that one or other of the two readings was superfluous, may have adopted the more precise statement and let the other drop.

5. The numerous sacrifices were probably offered at stages on the route, as at David's removal of the ark to the metropolis (2 Sam. vi. 13). The verse should probably be read as simplified in accordance with the LXX: 'And the king and all Israel (went) before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen,' &c.

6. The priests deposit the ark in the place prepared for it in the *debîr* of the temple. The words **to the most holy place** are a Priestly gloss (as in vi. 16).

7 the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread
forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the
cherubim covered the ark and the staves thereof above.
8 And the staves were so long that the ends of the staves
were seen from the holy place before the oracle; but
they were not seen without: and there they are, unto
9 this day. There was nothing in the ark save the two
tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, [D] when
the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel,
10 when they came out of the land of Egypt. [S] And it
came to pass, when the priests were come out of the
holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD,
11 so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason
of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD filled the house
of the LORD.

7, 8. The exact position of the ark under the wings of the cherubim is carefully defined. The meaning of verse 8 seems to be that the ark lay east and west, in such a position that its staves could just be seen in the darkness of the inner chamber from the main hall, but did not extend beyond the door. In Exod. xxv. 15 it is directed that the staves of the ark should not be removed. The words **and there they are unto this day** are not in the LXX, but are doubtless genuine: the temptation to omit them in later times is obvious.

9. The contents of the ark. Why the writer says it contained *nothing but* the tables of stone we cannot tell, unless there was a current impression that it held something else. As to what the ark really did contain at this time, see Kennedy in *DB*, i. p. 151. It may be noted that the expression 'Ark of the covenant of Yahweh' seems to have originated in the Deuteronomic school of writers; and the latter part of this verse shows clearly what was meant by it. It is necessary to insert a phrase from the LXX, and read (after **Horeb**): 'the tables of the covenant which Yahweh made with . . . Egypt.' (Cf. verse 21.)

10, 11. The introduction of the ark into the shrine is followed by the appearing of the glory of Yahweh in the form of a cloud, the ancient symbol of the theophany (Exod. xxxiii. 9 ff.). It is the visible token that Yahweh has taken up His abode in the new temple.

Then spake Solomon, The LORD hath said that he 12
would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built 13
thee an house of habitation, a place for thee to dwell

12, 13 contain, in a mutilated text, the pregnant formula of dedication uttered by Solomon on this occasion. The complete poetic form of the quatrain can be recovered by the help of the LXX, which puts the verse after verse 53 (an additional proof that the text of the chapter has been dislocated by the insertion of verses 14 ff.), and adds a note to the effect that the words were taken from the 'Book of Songs.' Wellhausen has plausibly conjectured that this is a mistake for 'Book of Jashar[1],' an old collection of poetry which contained Joshua's apostrophe to the sun and moon at Gibeon (Joshua x. 13), and David's elegy on Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. i. 18). Of the various reconstructions of the text that have been proposed, we here follow that given by Cheyne in *Origin of the Psalter*, pp. 193, 212; it may be translated thus :—

'The sun has Yahweh set in the heavens;
He (himself) has resolved to dwell in thick darkness:
Built have I a lofty mansion for thee,
A place for thee to dwell in for (all) ages.'

A singular interest attaches to this obscure and perhaps fragmentary epigram, *first* as an authentic document of the early Hebrew conception of the nature of Yahweh, and *second* as an expression of the religious idea embodied in the erection of the temple. The striking contrast in the first two lines, 'between the sun in his glorious heavenly mansion and the cloud-inhabiting Creator' (Cheyne), reveals even at this early period a belief in Yahweh as the Creator of the universe; and also a sense of the paradox involved in building a habitation for a Being so glorious and powerful. The higher religious minds of Israel had therefore advanced beyond the conception of a merely tribal or national Deity to that of a God who, under self-imposed limitations, is the Maker and Lord of Nature. The last two lines apply this thought to the building of the temple: the dark inner shrine is a suitable dwelling-place for the Being who has chosen to shroud Himself in thick darkness; while the external magnificence of the structure as a whole is worthy of Him who has fixed the sun in the heavens. The theology of the passage may be expressed in these three propositions: (1) the temple is literally the dwelling-place of Yahweh; (2) Yahweh is at the same time the Creator of the world; (3) the darkness in which He dwells symbolizes the

[1] הישר misread by transposition as השיר.

14 in for ever. [D] And the king turned his face about,
and blessed all the congregation of Israel: and all the
15 congregation of Israel stood. And he said, Blessed be
the LORD, the God of Israel, which spake with his mouth
unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled

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mystery of Divinity, the contrast between His nearness to Israel and His essential power and majesty. In so far as the founding of the temple impressed this profound idea of God on the mind of the nation, it was an event of the first importance in the history of the O. T. religion.

viii. 14–61. *The Orations of Solomon.*

Cf. 2 Chron. vi. 3–42. It was a common practice of ancient historians to throw their own interpretation of a historical situation into the form of speeches supposed to have been delivered at the time by the leading personages of the story. The compiler of Kings here avails himself of this literary license, in order to give expression to his own view of the supreme significance of this great event in the history of his people. The passage is remarkable for the orderly arrangement of thought; and it exhibits all the oratorical power which characterizes the Deuteronomic school of writers. It consists of three parts: (1) Solomon's address to the people, verses 15–21; (2) his Dedicatory Prayer, 22–53; and (3) the Benediction, 54–61.

There are some indications that the literary unity of the composition is not perfect. The position of verses 12 f. in the LXX, between verses 53 and 54, and the omission of the last section in Chronicles, are difficult to account for except on the assumption of some very extensive re-arrangements of the text in late times. Moreover, some allusions (e. g. 25 ff.) assume the existence of the Monarchy and the temple, while others (46 ff.) have been thought to presuppose the experience of the Exile. But these differences do not interfere with the general conclusion that the passage as a whole is Deuteronomic. That is abundantly proved by the numerous coincidences in style with the Book of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic parts of Joshua. Of these, a list is given in Driver's *Introduction*[6], p. 200 f.; see also Burney in *DB*, ii. p. 859 ff., and more fully in his *Notes*, p. 115 ff.

viii. 14–21. *The Address to the People.* This is mainly a recapitulation, based on 2 Sam. vii. 5 ff., of the providential circumstances which had led up to the building of the temple.

15, 16. A free rendering of 2 Sam. vii. 6 f., but with an important modification from the Deuteronomic point of view. The

it, saying, Since the day that I brought forth my people 16
Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes
of Israel to build an house, that my name might be
there; but I chose David to be over my people Israel.
Now it was in the heart of David my father to build 17
an house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.
But the LORD said unto David my father, Whereas it 18
was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou
didst well that it was in thine heart: nevertheless thou 19
shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come
forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my
name. And the LORD hath established his word that he 20
spake; for I am risen up in the room of David my
father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD
promised, and have built the house for the name of the
LORD, the God of Israel. And there have I set a place 21
for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the LORD, which

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meaning in Samuel is that Yahweh had dwelt in a tent since the Exodus, and did not wish to be installed in a 'house of cedar.' Here, on the contrary, the idea is that the period since the Exodus had been a transition period, during which Yahweh had not indicated the place where His temple was to be erected. The standpoint is obviously that of Deut. xii. 11, &c.

that my name might be there. See below on verse 29.

but I chose David. Read, inserting a clause from LXX and 2 Chron. vi. 6, 'but (now) I have chosen Jerusalem that my name might be there, and I have chosen David.' David's city and David's dynasty are frequently associated as theocratic institutions; they are twin pledges of Yahweh's covenant relation to Israel.

17–19. The building of the temple is the realization of a cherished design of David, which was overruled at the time, for reasons not here stated (see on verse 3). Verse 19 refers to 2 Sam. vii. 13, where it is simply stated that the temple was to be built by David's son. That verse, however, is evidently itself a Deuteronomic interpolation in 2 Sam. vii, for it is clear that the whole drift of Nathan's oracle is as little favourable to the building of a temple by Solomon as it is to David's proposal to build one himself.

21. wherein is the covenant of the LORD. See on verse 9.

he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

22 And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread
23 forth his hands toward heaven: and he said, O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven
24 above, or on earth beneath; who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants, that walk before thee with all their heart: who hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou didst promise him: yea, thou spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine
25 hand, as it is this day. Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; if only thy children take heed to their way, to
26 walk before me as thou hast walked before me. Now therefore, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David
27 my father. But will God in very deed dwell on the

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viii. 22-53. *The Prayer of Dedication.* It is delivered by Solomon *standing* in front of the altar, with hands outstretched to heaven—the universal ancient attitude in prayer (Exod. ix. 29; Isa. i. 15; 2 Macc. iii. 20, &c.: see Richm, *Handwörterbuch*, p. 485 ff.).

viii. 23–26. Prayer for the fulfilment of the promise to David (2 Sam. vii. 12 ff.).

24, indeed, speaks of the promise as already fulfilled in the establishment of Solomon's kingdom, and the completion of the temple; but

25, 26 contemplate a larger fulfilment in the maintenance of the newly-founded dynasty.

viii. 27–30. The burden of all the following petitions is here expressed in general terms, viz. that the temple may ever be the guarantee of intercourse between heaven and earth, the symbol and pledge of the answer to prayer.

27. But will God in very deed. In what sense can this house be thought of as the dwelling-place of the infinite and omnipresent

earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot
contain thee; how much less this house that I have
builded! Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy 28
servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to
hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant
prayeth before thee this day: that thine eyes may be 29
open toward this house night and day, even toward the
place whereof thou hast said, My name shall be there:
to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall pray
toward this place. And hearken thou to the supplication 30
of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall

Yahweh? LXX and Chronicles have, **dwell** *with men* **on the earth.** The question leads up to a conception of God's dwelling in the temple, more spiritual than that which prevailed in earlier times (verse 13). It becomes, as it were, the ideal point of contact at which God's thought and man's thought meet and touch each other, and real religious communion is established between them. This is the idea implied in verse

29. Yahweh's eyes are to be **open toward this house night and day:** when Israel prays **toward this place** Yahweh will hear 'in heaven His dwelling place,' and answer (cf. verse 52). In the examples which follow (verses 31 ff.), the prayer is conceived sometimes as offered *in* the temple, sometimes as directed *towards* it; in either case the underlying idea is the same.

whereof thou hast said, My name shall be there. See Deut. xii. 5, 11, xiv. 23, 24, xvi. 2, 6, 11, xxvi. 2. The association of the Divine name with the sanctuary is mostly Deuteronomic or later (2 Sam. vii. 13; 1 Kings iii. 2, v. 3, 5, &c.); but it appears in at least one older passage, Exod. xx. 24 ('where I will cause my name to be commemorated'). The idea probably originated in the liturgical phrase, 'to call on the name' of the Deity (Gen. iv. 26, xii. 8, xiii. 4, &c.). It describes the *evocation* of the Deity, by the solemn utterance of His name, which is the preliminary to every act of worship. Hence, to say that the name of Yahweh is *in* the sanctuary means practically, and in the first instance, that in that place Yahweh will *answer to His name*—will reveal His gracious presence in response to the worship of His servants. Whether, or in what degree, the Deuteronomic usage of the expression implies a hypostasis of the name, as a special and local manifestation of the Divine presence, is a question that need not be discussed here.

pray toward this place: yea, hear thou in heaven thy
31 dwelling place; and when thou hearest, forgive. If a
man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon
him to cause him to swear, and he come *and* swear
32 before thine altar in this house: then hear thou in
heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the
wicked, to bring his way upon his own head; and justi-
fying the righteous, to give him according to his right-
33 eousness. When thy people Israel be smitten down
before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee;
if they turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and
pray and make supplication unto thee in this house:
34 then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy
people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which
35 thou gavest unto their fathers. When heaven is shut up,
and there is no rain, because they have sinned against

30. when thou hearest, forgive. Every answer to prayer includes the forgiveness of sins.

viii. 31 ff. From this point the supplication resolves itself into an enumeration of typical cases—mostly of national distress—in which prayer would be offered toward or in the temple.

31, 32. The case of a curse pronounced in the sanctuary, over A transgressor against whom no legal evidence is procurable: cf. Exod. xxii. 7–12; Num. v. 5 ff. The Lord is besought to preside over the ordeal, and **judge** his **servants,** by giving effect to the curse if the man be guilty[1].

condemning . . . justifying: i. e. 'declaring guilty' or 'righteous' by the issue of the trial.

33, 34. Defeat of Israel in battle, as a consequence of apostasy from Yahweh.

and bring them again unto the land seems to imply the Exile; but this is inconsistent with **pray . . . in this house** (verse 33). Perhaps we should read, with a change of vowel points, 'and let them remain in the land,' i. e. avert the extreme penalty of exile (so Klostermann, Benzinger).

35, 36. The case of drought: cf. Deut. xi. 13–17. **when** (*or*,

[1] Many cases of this kind are referred to in the recently discovered code of Hammurabi. See Johns, *Oldest Code of Laws*, §§ 20, 131, 227, 266, &c.

thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them: then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of 36
thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when thou teachest them the good way wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance. If there be in the land 37
famine, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting *or* mildew, locust *or* caterpiller; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be; what prayer and supplica- 38
tion soever be made by any man, *or* by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and 39
forgive, and do, and render unto every man according to all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;) that they may fear thee all the days that they live in the 40
land which thou gavest unto our fathers. Moreover 41

'because') **thou dost afflict them,** is better than marg. 'because thou answerest them,' though it may involve a slight change of pointing; which, however, is warranted by LXX and Vulg.

the good way . . . walk. Cf. Jer. vi. 16.

viii. 37–40. *Famine, Pestilence, and other calamities.*

37. locust and **caterpiller** are probably names of distinct species of locusts (Joel i. 4: see Driver's Excursus, *Camb. Bible*, p. 82 ff.).

in the land of their cities (marg. 'gates'). Read, with LXX, 'in any of their gates,' a thoroughly Deuteronomic expression (Deut. xv. 7, xvii. 2, &c.).

38. Omit, or **by all thy people Israel** (LXX).

every man the plague of his own heart: a peculiar expression, probably = the stroke that affects him personally. The generalized language of the verse seems to show that the prayer is drawing near its conclusion.

viii. 41–43. *The Prayer of the Stranger.* Cf. Isa. lvi. 6, 7. Verses

concerning the stranger, that is not of thy people Israel,
when he shall come out of a far country for thy name's
42 sake; (for they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy
mighty hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he
43 shall come and pray toward this house; hear thou in
heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that
the stranger calleth to thee for; that all the peoples of
the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as doth thy
people Israel, and that they may know that this house
44 which I have built is called by thy name. [D²] If thy
people go out to battle against their enemy, by what-
soever way thou shalt send them, and they pray unto the
LORD toward the city which thou hast chosen, and
45 toward the house which I have built for thy name: then
hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication,
46 and maintain their cause. If they sin against thee, (for
there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry
with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they

41ᵇ and 42ᵃ are omitted by the LXX, which reads: 'that is not of thy people, but comes and prays.' The result of these answers to prayer will be to extend the knowledge of Yahweh's name to all the peoples of the earth.

43. this house . . . name. Render as in margin.

viii. 44, 45. *Prayers for Success in War.* The verses seem an Exilic parallel to 33 f. It is true that the situation contemplated might be pre-Exilic; but if it had belonged to the original scheme of the prayer it would naturally have stood alongside of 33 ff.; the language, moreover, resembles that of the next section, which is still more likely to be Exilic.

44. toward the city . . . house: *lit.* 'in the direction of the city . . . and of the house.' (Cf. verse 48.) The custom of praying with the face turned toward Jerusalem (the Mohammedan *kiblah*, first borrowed by the Prophet from the Jews, though afterwards modified in favour of Mecca) is not known to have existed before the Exile (see Dan. vi. 10).

45. maintain their cause (marg. 'right'): cf. verses 49, 59.

viii. 46–51. *Prayers in Exile.*

carry them away captive unto the land of the enemy, far
off or near; yet if they shall bethink themselves in the 47
land whither they are carried captive, and turn again,
and make supplication unto thee in the land of them
that carried them captive, saying, We have sinned, and
have done perversely, we have dealt wickedly; if they 48
return unto thee with all their heart and with all their
soul in the land of their enemies, which carried them
captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou
gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen,
and the house which I have built for thy name: then 49
hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven
thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause; and forgive 50
thy people which have sinned against thee, and all their
transgressions wherein they have transgressed against
thee; and give them compassion before those who car-
ried them captive, that they may have compassion on
them: for they be thy people, and thine inheritance, 51
which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst
of the furnace of iron: that thine eyes may be open 52

48. toward their land: 'in the direction of their land' (as verse 44). Kittel quotes a parallel from the late Jewish Midrash *Sifre* 71ᵇ: 'Those who dwell outside the land of Israel turn their faces toward the land of Israel and pray; those who dwell in the land of Israel turn their faces toward Jerusalem.'

50. give them compassion before (i. e. 'make them an object of compassion to') **those who carried them captive.** It is remarkable that deliverance from captivity is not expressly mentioned, and if contemplated at all, is looked for only from the generosity of the conqueror. Such a prayer could hardly have originated except under actual experience of exile, without any prospect of immediate relief.

51. the furnace of iron means the furnace in which iron is smelted. The phrase is found in Deut. iv. 20, Jer. xi. 4; the image in Isa. xlviii. 10, &c.

viii. 52, 53. *Conclusion of the Prayer.*

52 is mutilated at the beginning: **that thine eyes may be open** cannot be construed as an independent sentence, and is certainly

unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them
53 whensoever they cry unto thee. For thou didst separate them from among all the peoples of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD.
54 And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread forth toward heaven.
55 And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel
56 with a loud voice, saying, Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all

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not the continuation of verse 51. The original introduction must have been lost. LXX, as well as 2 Chron. vi. 40, have a smoother text.

53 is omitted by the chronicler, who substitutes an imperfect version of Ps. cxxxii. 8–10.

viii. 54–61. *The Benediction.* The section is wanting entirely in 2 Chron.; and in LXX (as already explained) is separated from the prayer (24–53) by the intrusion of verses 12, 13 of the Hebrew. There is a discrepancy between verse 54 and verse 22 (see below), which seems to show that it is later than the pre-Exilic parts of the prayer. Possibly it was added along with verses 44 ff., with which it has some linguistic affinities.

54. from kneeling on his knees. Kneeling is the posture of prayer in 1 Kings xix. 18, Isa. xlv. 23, Ezra ix. 5, 2 Chron. vi. 13, Dan. vi. 10, Ps. xcv. 6. There is no evidence that the practice was peculiarly post-Exilic. Standing, however, was a common attitude in early times (Gen. xviii. 22, 1 Sam. i. 26); and when the author of verse 22 says that Solomon 'stood,' he can hardly be supposed to mean the same thing as the writer of this verse.

56. hath given rest unto his people: an allusion to Deut. xii. 10 (see on v. 4). Although the expression in Deuteronomy might readily be taken to refer to the conquest of the land of Canaan, yet the connexion in which it occurs proves that the writer had really in view the peace secured by the efforts of David, and fully enjoyed under the reign of Solomon.

his good promise, which he promised by the hand of
Moses his servant. The LORD our God be with us, as 57
he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake
us: that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in 58
all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his
statutes, and his judgements, which he commanded our
fathers. And let these my words, wherewith I have 59
made supplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the
LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cause
of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel, as
every day shall require: that all the peoples of the earth 60
may know that the LORD, he is God; there is none else.
Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our 61
God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his command-
ments, as at this day. [S D] And the king, and all 62
Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD. And 63

57, 58. The blessing which Solomon invokes for the people is the continued presence of God in their midst, inclining their hearts to keep His covenant, and so realize the Deuteronomic ideal of national righteousness.

59, 60. The maintenance of Israel's right (cf. verses 45, 49) is the manifestation of Yahweh's power, and the demonstration to the world of his divinity. The idea is prominent in Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah.

61. Let your heart . . . be perfect: 'undivided,' completely surrendered.

viii. 62–66. *The Dedicatory Sacrifices and Observance of the Feast.* (Cf. 2 Chron. vii. 5–10.) The two events were contemporaneous, but are clearly distinguished in the narrative, the initiatory sacrifices being described in verses 62–64, and the celebration of the feast in 65, 66. Although the section has certainly passed through the hands of the compiler of Kings, its language is not wholly Deuteronomic; and it is on every ground probable that the kernel of it comes from the same ancient source as verses 1–13.

62. offered sacrifice. The word used is the generic term for bloody sacrifices: the various kinds are distinguished afterwards in verses 63, 64.

Solomon offered for the sacrifice of peace offerings, which
he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand
oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So
the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the
64 house of the LORD. The same day did the king hallow
the middle of the court that was before the house of the
LORD; for there he offered the burnt offering, and the
meal offering, and the fat of the peace offerings: because
the brasen altar that was before the LORD was too little

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63. peace offerings: see on next verse. The 120,000 sheep are not mentioned in the LXX.

So the king . . . dedicated. The Hebrew verb rendered 'dedicate' is the rare technical term used of the initiation or formal opening of (e. g.) a new house (Deut. xx. 5): from it comes *Ḥănukkāh* (Ps. xxx, title), the name of the late Feast of Dedication, instituted by Judas Maccabaeus (1 Macc. iv. 52 ff.). Cf. also the initiation of the altar (Num. vii. 10; 2 Chron. vii. 9) and the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. xii. 27). The sentence appears to imply that the sacrifices were the essential act of the dedication ceremony; hence they could hardly have been left unmentioned in the original account.

64 explains how it was possible to offer such an enormous quantity of sacrifices in a short time: the altar being too small, the king sanctified the entire area of the middle court in front of the house.

did . . . hallow: 'sanctify,' set apart as holy. The verse hardly implies that the sanctity of the middle area was perpetuated, or that the writer traces back to this temporary emergency a permanent arrangement of his own day (so Kittel).

the burnt-offering (*ʿōlāh*) is the holocaust, offered entirely to God, and wholly consumed on the altar (*lit.* that which wholly 'goes up' in sacrificial smoke).

The **meal offering** (*minḥāh*) was originally a present or offering made to God of any kind, whether vegetable or animal; but in post-Exilic usage it became specialized in the sense of *cereal oblation*: this is probably the meaning here. Of the **peace offerings** (*shĕlāmim*, the exact meaning is not certain) only the fat was offered on the altar, the other parts furnishing the material of a sacrificial meal. Verse 63 shows that (as might be expected) the bulk of the sacrifices offered that day were of this class.

the brasen altar. It is certainly surprising that no mention of this important structure occurs in the account of the temple

to receive the burnt offering, and the meal offering, and the fat of the peace offerings. So Solomon held the 65
feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the brook of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days. On the eighth day 66

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furniture in ch. vii. Most recent scholars suppose that the description of it has been struck out by a late editor, who imagined that the brasen altar of the tabernacle was still in existence, and that no other was needed. The view of W. R. Smith has already been spoken of (above, p. 126). If the latter hypothesis is too ingenious, the other is much too easy (see the convincing arguments of Burney, p. 102 f.). The question does not greatly concern us here, except in so far as the verse goes to show that whatever the brasen altar was, its function was to receive all sacrifices offered by fire. The brasen pillars could not have been used for that purpose. The truth may be that there was at first no artificial altar in Solomon's temple, the sacrifices being offered on the sacred rock which rises in the middle of the Haram area (see Appendix, p. 441).

65. the feast is the Feast of Tabernacles ; see on verse 2.

from the entering in of Hamath. Hamath is the modern *Hamā* on the Orontes; the 'entering in,' or 'approach,' of Hamath (which is so frequently given as the northern limit of the Holy Land) is probably the pass between Hermon and Lebanon, through which Coele-Syria is entered from the south (Buhl). It does not take us nearly so far north as the city of Hamath itself.

the brook of Egypt is the *Wadi el-Arîsh*, entering the sea nearly fifty miles south-west of Gaza. Towards the end of the verse the LXX has an addition so characteristically Deuteronomic in its view of the annual festivals that it may reasonably be assigned to the pre-Exilic compiler of Kings: 'before the Lord our God, in the house which he had built, eating and drinking and rejoicing before the Lord our God' (cf. Deut. xii. 7, xvi. 14). And the LXX is certainly to be followed in the omission of the last words: **and seven days, even fourteen days,** which are flatly contradicted by the opening of the next verse. How they came to be added we can partly see from 2 Chron. vii. 8, 9. There the duration of the feast is given correctly as seven days; but it is added that the previous seven days had been devoted to the dedication of the altar: the two together make up the fourteen days of our gloss.

66. On the eighth day. In accordance with Deut. xvi. 13, 15

he sent the people away, and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had shewed unto David his servant, and to Israel his people.

9 [D] And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to

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the feast lasts seven days, and on the eighth the people are ready to depart to their homes. In 2 Chron., on the other hand, we read that the eighth day was occupied with a 'solemn assembly.' This corresponds with post-Exilic practice (Lev. xxiii. 36; Num. xxviii. 25); and accordingly the chronicler postpones the dismissal of the people to the twenty-third day of the month, the feast having begun on the fifteenth.

and they blessed the king: or, 'bade farewell to the king.' But LXX (B) says, much more naturally, that the king blessed them. So the joyful and auspicious season comes to an end.

ix. 1–9. *Second Appearance of the Lord to Solomon.* The answer to the prayer of ch. viii comes in the form of a night vision, like that which had been granted to Solomon at the beginning of his reign. The passage is thus on the one hand the immediate sequel to ch. viii, and on the other a Deuteronomic parallel to iii. 5–14. That it comes from the hand of the compiler is clear, not only from its dependence on ch. viii, but also from its style, which is if possible even more strongly marked by Deuteronomic phraseology than viii. 14 ff. (see again, Driver, *Introd.*[6], p. 200 f.). The motive for its insertion is most clearly expressed in verses 6–9, which are written from the standpoint of the Exile, and manifestly for the purpose of explaining the great catastrophe of the destruction of the temple. These verses, however, are not quite of a piece with what precedes: they are addressed not to Solomon but to the nation at large; they make no express reference to the prayer; and introduce the specific charge of polytheism, which is not contained in the more general warning of verses 4, 5. It is not improbable that verses 1–5 were written by the pre-Exilic compiler, while verses 6–9 belong to the second redaction.

1. The revelation comes to Solomon just when he is elated by the successful execution of his architectural projects.

desire: an uncommon word, paraphrased in 2 Chron. vii. 11 by 'all that came into his heart.'

do, that the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, 2
as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. And the LORD 3
said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And as for thee, if thou wilt 4
walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgements; then I will establish the throne of thy 5
kingdom over Israel for ever; according as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. [D²] But if ye shall turn 6
away from following me, ye or your children, and not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but shall go and serve other gods, and worship them: then will I cut off Israel out of the land 7
which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and

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2. as he had appeared . . . Gibeon: i. e. in a dream by night (iii. 5). That Gibeon was also the scene of this second vision is not to be inferred.

3. After **before me** LXX adds: '(Behold) I have done for thee according to all thy prayer.' The clause is probably genuine.

to put. Render, 'by putting' my name, &c. (cf. viii. 16, 29).

4, 5. A promise of the establishment of Solomon's kingdom, on condition of his fidelity to the covenant: the answer to the petition of viii. 25 f. (Cf. ii. 4; 2 Sam. vii. 13).

6–9. A threat of the dispersion of the nation and overthrow of the temple. The abrupt change from the sing. to the plur. is very remarkable (see above).

shall go and serve other gods. Both the expression and the idea—that the Exile was a judgement specially on idolatry—are very characteristic of Deuteronomy.

7. cast out of my sight: *lit.* 'send away'; but 2 Chron. vii. 20 has the stronger word properly rendered 'cast out.'

Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all peoples:
8 and though this house be so high, yet shall every one
that passeth by it be astonished, and shall hiss; and
they shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this
9 land, and to this house? And they shall answer, Because they forsook the LORD their God, which brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the LORD brought all this evil upon them.

10 [A] And it came to pass at the end of twenty years,

a byword (*lit.* 'a teethy saying'): very rare; only Deut. xxviii. 37 and Jer. xxiv. 9.

8. and though this house be so high. The Hebrew text (of which the margin gives the correct translation) is quite impossible. We must either substitute for 'high' a word meaning 'ruins'[1]; or (somewhat as 2 Chron. vii. 21) read, 'and as for this high house, every one,' &c.; or (combining both devices, with Thenius), 'and this house which is high shall become a heap of ruins.' The first suggestion is best.

8^b, **9.** The astonishment of the heathen finds expression in this question and answer. Note the close resemblance to Deut. xxix. 24–29.

ix. 10–28. *Miscellaneous Notices, mostly relating to Solomon's Public Works.*

Here we come to a second group of fragmentary notices, which (like iv. 1–28) have all the appearance of being based on extracts from the Annals of Solomon (see introductory note, p. 81 f.). It is impossible to tell how far the literary form of the passage (which Driver considers to be less complete than that of any other portion of the book) is due to the compiler, and how far to subsequent rearrangements of the text. In the LXX many of the fragments are placed in quite different connexions; but it cannot be said that, on the whole, its recension is at all superior to the Hebrew. Burney traces a single original document in verses 10, 17, 18, 19, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24^b (in that order). The connexion thus obtained is undoubtedly a good one: after completing the temple and the palace, Solomon built Gezer, Beth-horon, &c.; then follows an account of the forced levy raised to carry out these

[1] עיין for עליון.

wherein Solomon had built the two houses, the house of
the LORD and the king's house, (now Hiram the king of 11
Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and fir
trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that
then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land
of Galilee. And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the 12

works; and then the account of his maritime enterprise (26–28). The passages which interrupt this connexion are not necessarily less authentic than the main narrative; they are, at least in part, genuine excerpts from ancient sources. In the absence of any obvious principle of arrangement, however, we must here be content to take each notice by itself, disentangling as far as possible the original annalistic statement from the editorial accretions. (The attempt to exhibit the analysis by marginal letters has been renounced as too cumbrous.)

ix. 10–14. *Cession of Territory to Hiram.* The real nature of the transaction is disguised by the parenthesis in verse 11, which gives the impression that the twenty cities were handed over in payment of materials supplied for the royal buildings. But we know from v. 11 that this expense was defrayed by an annual tribute of wheat and oil; and there is no reason to suppose either that Hiram had raised his terms or that the tribute had fallen into arrears. The matter appears in its true light when we read verse 14 in connexion with 11^b. Solomon is pressed for want of ready money, and parts with the twenty towns in return for an advance of 120 talents of gold. In later times it seemed incredible that the wealthy and prosperous Solomon should have been reduced to such straits; and the chronicler simply reverses the relations of the two parties, and says that Solomon fortified the cities which Hiram had ceded to him (2 Chron. viii. 2).

10, 11. A clue to the analysis of the section is furnished by the particle 'then' in the middle of verse 11. As the continuation of what precedes, its use would be quite anomalous; on the other hand, it is characteristically employed in one of the primary documents to introduce an entirely new subject (see on iii. 16). We may therefore conclude that the annalistic notice commenced here, **Then king Solomon gave Hiram,** and that the previous clause (11^a) was inserted to supply a connexion. The real continuation of verse 10 is probably found in verse 17.

in the land of Galilee: *lit.* 'the Circuit'; called in Isa. ix. 1 'the Circuit of the nations,' because of its mixed population (cf. the German 'Heidenmark'; G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.* p. 413). From 2 Kings xv. 29; Joshua xx. 7, xxi. 32; 1 Chron. vi. 76, it

cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased
13 him not. And he said, What cities are these which thou
hast given me, my brother? And he called them the
14 land of Cabul, unto this day. And Hiram sent to the
king sixscore talents of gold.
15 And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon

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would appear to have been originally pretty nearly co-extensive with the territory of Naphtali (but see on verse 13 below). Before N. T. times the name had been extended to the whole of the northern district of Palestine, north of the plain of Esdraelon.

12, 13. Hiram expresses his discontent with the transfer; and the circumstance gives rise to a contemptuous epithet for the whole region, which had survived to the writer's own day. The name *Kabūl*, indeed, has survived even to our day as that of a village nine miles south-east of Accho, which is identified with the Cabul mentioned in Joshua xix. 27 as a frontier town of Asher. It is certainly difficult to dissociate the town of Cabul from **the land of Cabul** here referred to; though in that case Galilee must, in the time of the writer, have included the tribe of Asher as well as Naphtali. But what popular etymology underlies the idea of contempt imported into the term cannot be made out; the statement of Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 142) that *Chabolon* is Phoenician for 'not pleasing' deserves no credit.

14. See introductory note above, p. 159.

A **talent of gold** is estimated as equivalent (not in purchasing power, but in weight) to £6,150 sterling (Kennedy, in *DB*, iii. p. 150). This would make the sum raised by Solomon a little under three-quarters of a million sterling; its purchasing power would enormously exceed what these figures represent to us.

ix. 15–23. *The Corvée and the purposes to which it was applied.* Two (or rather, three) fragments are here amalgamated in a somewhat perplexing fashion. (*a*) The account of the levy, promised in 15ª, is given in verses 20–23. Here verses 20–22 are unhistorical and late, so that for the annalistic document there remains at most the isolated verse 23, which must have been followed by a list of officers, now lost. (*b*) Into this notice about the levy has been dovetailed an enumeration of Solomon's buildings and fortifications (15ᵇ–19), in order to explain the necessity for so continuous a drain on the labour resources of the population. (*c*) In the middle of (*b*), again, verses 16, 17ª are a parenthesis, suggested by the mention of Gezer, but plainly breaking the sequence. Since they are omitted by the LXX in this place, and inserted (along with iii. 1) at the end of ch. iv, they evidently

raised; for to build the house of the LORD, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor,

formed a detached notice. In the LXX the bulk of the section (verses 15, 17b–22) is transferred to ch. x; small portions are repeated in the long addition under ii. 35; verse 23 is found only there. (On Burney's rearrangement of the passage, see above, p. 158.)

15a. the reason (better, 'account') **of the levy.** See on iv. 9. **15b** introduces the enumeration of Solomon's public works, of which the most important (next to the temple and the palace) was doubtless the fortification of Jerusalem.

Millo (read 'the Millo'): cf. verse 24, xi. 27, 2 Sam. v. 9 (with pars. in Chron.). These are all the passages where the structure referred to is *certainly* mentioned: 2 Kings xii. 20 ('the house of Millo') is doubtful. We read also of a 'house of Millo' in Judges ix. 6, 20. From its association with the wall of Jerusalem we may with great probability infer that it was some distinctive feature of the defences of the capital; but of its exact situation, or the kind of structure denoted by the name—whether a 'house,' a 'tower,' or an 'embankment'—nothing is known. The word is probably derived from a verb meaning 'to fill,' and is most naturally understood in the sense supported by the Jewish Targum, of a mound or earthwork. In xi. 27 the Millo appears to be described as 'closing the breach of the city of David.' If it be the case (see Appendix, p. 440) that the city of David was cut off by a small ravine from the temple mount, it would be an important object to connect the two by a line of fortifications; and we might conjecture that the Millo was an embankment with a retaining wall which carried the fortification across the ravine. This would agree with 2 Sam. v. 9, which says that David 'built round about from the Millo and inward'; i. e. built that portion of the later city which lay to the south of the Millo. The verse does not *necessarily* imply that the Millo existed before Solomon.

The determination of the course of **the wall** depends on two points, neither of which has been finally settled: *first*, whether the western hill was included in the fortifications; and *second*, how far the 'old wall' described by Josephus in *Bell. Jud.* v. 146 ff. corresponds with the wall of Solomon. Until these questions have been securely determined it will not be possible to decide with certainty whether the remains of ancient fortifications recently discovered on the south of the city go back to the time of Solomon. (See Benzinger in *Explorations in Bible Lands*, p. 602 ff.)

We have next a list, continued in 17b, of cities built (i. e. fortified) by Solomon throughout his dominions.

Hazor was in the extreme north of the country, in Naphtali,

16 and Megiddo, and Gezer. Pharaoh king of Egypt had
gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and
slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it
17 for a portion unto his daughter, Solomon's wife. And
18 Solomon built Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether, and
19 Baalath, and Tamar in the wilderness, in the land, and
all the store cities that Solomon had, and the cities for
his chariots, and the cities for his horsemen, and that
which Solomon desired to build for his pleasure in
Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his

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near Kedesh (2 Kings xv. 29; Joshua xix. 36, &c.); the exact site is disputed.

Megiddo: south of the plain of Esdraelon (see on iv. 12).

Gezer (*Tell Jezer*, south-east of Ramleh) occupies a strong position, guarding the chief access to Jerusalem from the coast: see G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.* p. 215 ff.

16, 17a. An historical notice, explaining how this Canaanitish city came into the possession of Solomon. Of this Egyptian expedition to Palestine nothing further is known; it must surely have had political consequences of a more far-reaching kind than the provision of a dowry for Solomon's wife. The notice is valuable as showing that the Canaanites had in isolated communities preserved their independence against both Hebrews and Philistines down to the age of Solomon.

17b. Beth-horon the nether. The two Beth-horons (*Beit 'Ur et-taḥta*, and *Beit 'Ur el-foḳa*) lie over a mile apart, on the northernmost route from Jerusalem to Joppa, with a difference of elevation of about 500 feet: see G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.* p. 210 *n*.

18. Baalath (Joshua xix. 44) is not known.

Tamar in the wilderness. 2 Chron. viii. 4 reads, 'Tadmor in the wilderness,' i. e. the famous Palmyra, 150 miles north-east of Damascus. From this comes the alternative reading given in the margin, which is supported by the ancient versions, and by the traditional pronunciation of the synagogue (the so-called *Ḳĕrê*). There can be little doubt, however, that it rests on a mistake of the chronicler, and that the true reading is that of the Hebrew consonants, 'Tamar,'—the 'wilderness' being the wilderness of Judah. The locality cannot be determined.

The words **in the land** must be corrupt.

19. store cities: see Exod. i. 11.

and in Lebanon. The LXX omits the clause, but in another

dominion. As for all the people that were left of the 20
Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and
the Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel;
their children that were left after them in the land, whom 21
the children of Israel were not able utterly to destroy,
of them did Solomon raise a levy of bondservants, unto
this day. But of the children of Israel did Solomon 22
make no bondservants: but they were the men of war,
and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and
rulers of his chariots and of his horsemen. These were 23
the chief officers that were over Solomon's work, five

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place (ii. 46c) contains a reference to the 'opening' of some kind of works in Lebanon by Solomon. Winckler conjectures that iron mines are meant.

20-22. The statement that Solomon imposed the *corvée* on the remnant of the Canaanitish population is no doubt accurate, but the further statement of verse 22 that no Israelites were impressed is directly opposed to v. 13, xi. 28.

The phrase **unto this day** shows that the passage reflects the circumstances of a later time, when perhaps only aliens were subject to forced labour in the public service.

21. utterly to destroy: *lit.* 'to put to the ban.'

raise a levy of bondservants. Render, 'levy for a labour gang.'

22. The high estimate of the military profession here expressed is scarcely in the spirit of Deuteronomy (see especially Deut. xvii. 16), and is strikingly at variance with 1 Sam. viii. 11 f., where the very thing which Solomon here does is represented as part of the curse of monarchy.

captains. The Hebrew word (*shālish*) seems to mean the 'third man' in a chariot, the shield-bearer (in addition to the driver and the warrior): cf. Exod. xiv. 7. It is true that the Egyptian chariots carried only two men; but the Asiatic chariots carried three, and this custom may have been followed by the Hebrews (see P. Haupt, *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, iv. 583–587).

23 is evidently the heading of a lost register of the chief officials of the labour bureau (cf. iv. 2, 8).

For **chief officers** read 'chiefs of the officers': the number, 550, can hardly refer to the heads of the department, but only to subordinate officials. 2 Chron. viii. 10 gives the number as 250,

hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that
24 wrought in the work. But Pharaoh's daughter came up
out of the city of David unto her house which *Solomon*
25 had built for her: then did he build Millo. And three
times in a year did Solomon offer burnt offerings and
peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto the
LORD, burning incense therewith, *upon the altar* that
was before the LORD. So he finished the house.
26 And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-

LXX (B) as 3,600, in accordance with verse 16, of which (in spite of the confusion in the figures) this verse is probably a variant.

ix. 24. *Removal of Pharaoh's Daughter to her new House.* Another displaced fragment, inserted by the LXX at the end of verse 9, and in ii. 35[f]. The curious importance that seems attached to the incident makes the loss of the original connexion in this case particularly tantalizing.

then: introducing an entirely independent notice, as in verse 11[b]. For **Millo** read '*the* Millo.'

ix. 25. *Solomon's yearly Sacrifices.* The verse occurs in the LXX only as ii. 35[g].

did . . . offer: 'used to offer.'

the altar which he built. This is the only reference to the building of an altar by Solomon; and W. R. Smith contends that a built altar must be an altar of stone (see on viii. 64).

burning incense therewith. Here the text is hopelessly corrupt.

So he finished the house is a very doubtful rendering of the Hebrew, though accepted by most commentators. The form of the verb is frequentative (He used to finish!); and it does not appear to be used in the sense of finish (rather 'restore'). Possibly it may express the effect of the periodical sacrifices: something like 'restored the (ceremonial) integrity of' the house.

ix. 26-28. *The Ophir Expeditions.* With the aid of Phoenician shipwrights and seamen, readily lent by Hiram his ally, Solomon constructed and manned, on the Red Sea, a fleet of ships destined for the long and adventurous voyage to Ophir. This novel enterprise was crowned with complete success; and we learn from x. 22 that it was followed up by a regular series of expeditions, each of which occupied three years. The vessels returned laden with many curious products of tropical lands; and above all with a rich store of the gold for which Ophir was famous.

geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent in the navy 27
his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. And they came to Ophir, 28
and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon.

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26. Eloth, or Elath, the *Aelana* of the classical geographers, the modern *'Aḳābā*, is at the head of the north-east arm of the Red Sea, which both in ancient and modern times has derived its name from the town (*Aelanitic* Gulf, Gulf of *Akaba*). A little north of the present village are some ruins, which may be those of the ancient Elath. It is only mentioned here to define the situation of **Ezion-geber,** which appears to be an older port that had been eclipsed by Elath. The exact site is unknown. The conjecture of Robinson (*Biblical Researches*, i. 169 f.), that the sea had once extended further inland, would furnish at once an explanation of the disappearance of Ezion-geber as a harbour and permit of its identification with a place of similar name, *'Ain el-Ghudyan*, fifteen miles north of the present head of the gulf.

in the land of Edom. Solomon seems to have lost the suzerainty over Edom at an early period of his reign (ch. xi); but he must have kept control of the caravan route leading through the country to the Red Sea.

27. Hiram sends experienced navigators to take charge of the fleet. In 2 Chron. viii. 18 it is said that he also sent his ships: the mistake probably originated in a misunderstanding of the expression 'ship of Tarshish' (see on x. 22).

28. Ophir. The controversy as to the situation of the biblical Ophir seems hardly nearer a settlement to-day than at any time in the last three centuries. The various theories will be found discussed in the articles of Price in Hastings's *DB*, and Cheyne in *EB*. The discovery in 1871 of remains of ancient gold-diggings around Zimbabwe in Mashonaland has imparted a fresh interest to the opinion that Ophir is to be looked for on the Sofala coast, opposite the island of Madagascar. But the weight of evidence appears to be in favour of the theory of Glaser, who holds that Ophir was the coast of the gold-producing region of Eastern Arabia, on the shore of the Persian Gulf. Starting from Ezion-geber, the ships would thus sail down the Red Sea and through the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb; then eastward along the Somali coast of Africa as far as Cape Guardafui; thence along the southern coast of Arabia to the entrance of the Persian Gulf; and then up the Gulf to their destination. Glaser has shown that under the

10 [S?] And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to

most favourable conditions, taking account of the alternations of the south-west and north-east monsoons, the double voyage could not be accomplished in less than three years. See Glaser, *Skizze der Gesch. u. Geog. Arabiens*, ii. p. 357–383.

x. 1–13. *Visit of the Queen of Sheba.*

The story of the queen of Sheba as here told is obviously meant to illustrate the far-famed wisdom of Solomon. She is perhaps introduced as the most interesting of the royal personages who came from the ends of the earth to hear his discourse (iv. 34); and the purpose of the visit is expressly said to have been 'to prove him with hard questions.' We have no reason to doubt that she was a real personage, or that the visit actually took place; although it may be conjectured that its primary object was political rather than philosophical. A good understanding with Solomon was of the utmost importance for the great trading community which the queen represented, and all the more if there was a historical connexion between her mission and the Ophir expedition described in the preceding verses (cf. Glaser, loc. cit., p. 383 ff.). It is probable, therefore, that the present form of the narrative belongs to a comparatively late time, when the original significance of the event was forgotten, and only the memory of it retained as an exhibition of Solomon's wisdom and magnificence. The story naturally impressed the imagination of the later Arabs, and was worked up into a great variety of legendary and fantastic anecdotes, which it is needless to say contribute nothing to our understanding of the incident.

1. Sheba was known to Strabo and Pliny as the seat of a great commercial empire in the south-west of Arabia, having its capital at Mariaba (*Marib*), six days' journey east of the modern *Sana'a*. Its civilization and political importance are attested by the imposing ruins of Marib (see Hommel, in *Explorations in Bible Lands*, pp. 697, 705), as well as by numerous contemporary inscriptions and monuments. About the seventh century B. C. it seems to have overthrown an older Minaean kingdom, and stepped into its place as the leading people of Arabia. (Cf. Jer. vi. 20; Ezek. xxvii. 22 ff., xxxviii. 13; Isa. lx. 6; Ps. lxxii. 15: and see Winckler, *KAT*^{2}, p. 148 ff.; Hommel, loc. cit., 728 ff.). Of the earlier history of Sheba, or its position in the days of Solomon, nothing is certainly known; nor have queens so far been discovered among the names of its rulers (Winckler, p. 150).

concerning the name of the LORD: a difficult expression. The best suggestion (though unsupported by external authority) is

prove him with hard questions. And she came to Je- 2
rusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare
spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and
when she was come to Solomon, she communed with
him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her 3
all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the
king which he told her not. And when the queen of 4
Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, and the
house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and 5
the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his
ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his
ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD;
there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the 6
king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land
of thine acts, and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed 7
not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it:

---

that of Klostermann, who supplements the text and reads: '[and the fame of the house which he had built] to the name of Yahweh.'

with hard questions: strictly, 'with riddles'; cf. Judges xiv. 12. So the Tyrian legend represents the intercourse between Solomon and Hiram as initiated by a similar display of wit (see on v. 1).

2. spices (or 'balsams'), **and very much gold, and precious stones:** all native products of south-west Arabia.

all that was in her heart: i. e. all the riddles she had been able to invent, or all the problems that perplexed her.

4, 5. Having proved the reality of Solomon's wisdom, the queen is now lost in admiration of the luxury and splendour which are its outward reflection. Verse 5 is apparently the description of a state-banquet.

the sitting of his servants may mean their places at table; and **the attendance of his ministers** (rather, 'waiters') the alert attitude of his personal attendants.

his ascent. Read, with marg., 'his burnt-offering ... offered.'

there was no more spirit in her. In O. T. psychology the word *rûaḥ* (spirit) sometimes denotes the more intense manifestations of mental activity: when these are suspended the *rûaḥ* is said to depart (cf. 1 Sam. xxx. 12, &c.), although the life-principle (*nephesh*) remains. The idea is that she was quite out of herself with amazement (so LXX).

and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and
8 prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy
are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand
continually before thee, *and* that hear thy wisdom.
9 Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee,
to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD
loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do
10 judgement and justice. And she gave the king an
hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very
great store, and precious stones: there came no more
such abundance of spices as these which the queen of
11 Sheba gave to king Solomon. [A] And the navy also of
Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from
Ophir great plenty of almug trees and precious stones.
12 And the king made of the almug trees pillars for the
house of the LORD, and for the king's house, harps also
and psalteries for the singers: there came no such almug
13 trees, nor were seen, unto this day. [S?] And king
Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire,

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8. thy men: LXX, &c., read more appropriately, 'thy wives.'

11, 12 are obviously an interpolation (perhaps a continuation of ix. 28) suggested by the last clause of verse 10, calling attention to the fact that Solomon had other means of supplying himself with the costly products of Arabia.

almug trees: better 'almug wood': mentioned only here, and (in the form 'algum') in 2 Chron. ii. 8, ix. 10, 11. It has commonly been identified with the fragrant red sandal wood, but on somewhat uncertain grounds. Glaser contends that the Styrax shrub must be meant (loc. cit., p. 358 ff.); while Cheyne finds a philological equivalent in the Babylonian *elamakku*, a tree used by Sennacherib in building his palaces (*Expository Times*, ix. 470 ff.).

12. The word rendered **pillars** is an obscure technical term, of which no satisfactory explanation has been given. 2 Chron. ix. 11 reads differently (R. V. 'terraces').

harps also and psalteries. On these musical instruments, see the Appendix to Wellhausen's translation of the Psalms, *Polychrome Bible*, p. 222 ff.

13 concludes the narrative.

whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned, and went to her own land, she and her servants.

[A] Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in 14
one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of
gold, beside *that which* the chapmen *brought*, and the 15
traffic of the merchants, and of all the kings of the
mingled people, and of the governors of the country.
And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten 16

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beside that which . . . bounty. The margin shows that there is some irregularity in the text, due perhaps to the intrusion of a gloss. The general sense, however, is correctly expressed by R. V.

x. 14–29. *Further Notices of Solomon's Wealth and Grandeur.* See the note on ix. 15–28 above. The present section resumes the annalistic account of Solomon's affairs, which is interrupted by the episode of the queen of Sheba.

x. 14, 15. *Solomon's Revenue.* (Cf. 2 Chron. ix. 13, 14.) The income of a single year is stated at the almost incredible figure of 666 talents of gold (about £4,100,000 in *weight*), exclusive of certain tolls and other obscurely indicated sources of revenue. The revenue must have fluctuated greatly from year to year; and the figures of verse 14 may be supposed to be taken from the inflated budget of some abnormally prosperous year.

15. beside that which **the chapmen** brought. The sense is hopelessly obscure. The chief difficulty lies in the word rendered 'chapmen' (*tûrîm* = spies?), of which no acceptable explanation has been suggested. The LXX reads, 'besides the tribute of the subjects,' intelligible enough in itself, but throwing little light on the Hebrew. Leaving the word *tûrîm* untranslated, we might construe as follows: 'besides what came in from the . . . and from the commerce of the merchants and all the kings,' &c. (so virtually Kittel). There is plainly an allusion to a tariff levied on the commerce carried on within Solomon's sphere of influence.

of the mingled people. Read, as in 2 Chron. ix. 14, 'of Arabia.'

governors, *satraps*, is an Assyrian loan-word, rarely (if ever) used by pre-Exilic writers (see xx. 24, 2 Kings xviii. 24). The verse may therefore be of late origin.

x. 16, 17. *The Shields of Gold.* (Cf. 2 Chron. ix. 15, 16.)

gold: six hundred *shekels* of gold went to one target.
17 And *he made* three hundred shields of beaten gold;
three pound of gold went to one shield: and the king
18 put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon. More-
over the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid
19 it with the finest gold. There were six steps to the
throne, and the top of the throne was round behind:
and there were stays on either side by the place of the
20 seat, and two lions standing beside the stays. And twelve

---

200 large and 300 small shields are made of beaten gold, and placed in the house of the Forest of Lebanon. From xiv. 26-28 we learn that these costly weapons were borne by the royal body-guard on ceremonial occasions, as when the king visited the temple.

16. targets (Heb. *zinnāh*), i. e. large oblong shields, protecting the whole body of the warrior, like the Roman *scutum*. The weight of gold on each shield is about 20 lb.

17. shields. The word here used (*māgēn*) denotes the small round shield, the *clipeus* of the Romans. The **pound** (*maneh*) was equal to either sixty or (more probably) fifty shekels; hence the gold in each small shield was about one-fourth of that in the larger.

x. 18–20. *The Ivory Throne.* (Cf. 2 Chron. ix. 17–19.)

18. A throne of ivory does not mean one made entirely of ivory, any more than an ivory palace (xxii. 39, Amos iii. 15, Ps. xlv. 8) is a house built of that material. Nor need we suppose that the costly ivory was completely covered by the gold. What is meant is no doubt a piece of furniture of which some parts were veneered with ivory and other parts plated with gold.

the finest gold. Some ancient versions read: 'gold from Ophir.' The doubtful word occurs nowhere else; 2 Chron. ix. 17 substitutes the ordinary word for 'pure.'

19. the top of the throne...: better, 'the throne had a rounded top behind.' The text has had a curious and instructive history. The LXX read *'āgōl* (round) as *'ēgel* (calf), and rendered 'calves' heads' (which, by the way, is accepted as the true reading by the majority of commentators). Then another scribe took offence at *'ēgel* because it reminded him of Jeroboam's golden calves, and substituted 'lambs' (*kebes*). Ultimately *kebes* was changed to *kebesh* (= footstool), as we have it in 2 Chron. ix. 18, along with other modifications demanded by the new sense.

stays: *lit.* 'hands' (as marg.); i. e. supports for the arms.

lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom.
[Z] And all king Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, 21
and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold: none were of silver; it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. For the king had 22
at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram: once every three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. So 23
king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. And all the earth sought the 24

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20. there is better omitted, as in the LXX.

x. 21, 22. *Depreciation of Silver caused by Solomon's commercial ventures.* (Cf. 2 Chron. ix. 20, 21.)

22. a navy of Tarshish: i. e. a fleet of large sea-going vessels, such as the Phoenicians employed for the voyage to Tarshish (Tartessus) on the Guadalquivir in Spain. Such ships were the 'East Indiamen' of the ancient world. Although Ophir is not here mentioned as the destination of the ships, there can be no doubt that the reference is to the expedition described in ix. 26–28; cf. xxii. 48. The expression was misunderstood by the chronicler, who not unnaturally thought that the fleet actually sailed to Tarshish.

once every three years. See on ix. 28.

ivory: Heb. *shenḥabbîm*; LXX, 'elephants' tusks' (in 2 Chron. ix. 21). The common word for ivory is simply *shēn* (= tooth); hence it has been conjectured, but without much plausibility, that *ḥabbîm* is a foreign name for elephants.

apes, and peacocks. The names (*ḳôphîm* and *tukkiyyîm*) are supposed to be of Indian origin; and the peacocks, at all events, could only have come from that country. Winckler, however, (*KAT*^{3}, p. 238) proposes to read *ṣukkiyyîm* (= negroes, as 2 Chron. xii. 3); in which case the 'ivory, apes and negroes' might all be native African products, which the ships could have picked up while waiting for a favourable wind off the Somali coast. The text was too difficult for the LXX translators, who render 'stones wrought and hewn.'

x. 23–25. *Solomon the foremost Monarch of his time.* (Cf. 2 Chron. ix. 22–24.) The idealization of Solomon's power and splendour here reaches its acme. Not only does he excel all the

presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God
25 had put in his heart. And they brought every man his
present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment,
and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year
26 by year. [A] And Solomon gathered together chariots
and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hun-
dred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, which he
bestowed in the chariot cities, and with the king at
27 Jerusalem. [Z] And the king made silver to be in
Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the
sycomore trees that are in the lowland, for abundance.
28 [A] And the horses which Solomon had were brought

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kings of the earth in wisdom, and wealth, and pomp; but they all acknowledge his superiority, and pay him homage with rich presents year by year. There is something almost Messianic in this conception of a king of Israel ruling the whole world, not by force of arms, but by the spell of his personality and the glamour of a success which marks him out as the favourite of heaven. The description must be of late date; but it is very instructive as showing the manner in which the national consciousness was influenced and uplifted by the Solomonic tradition.

x. 26–29. *Solomon's Horses and Chariots.* (Cf. 2 Chron. i. 14–17, ix. 25–28.) This concluding notice rests on authentic data, although the original connexion has been disturbed by the insertion of verse 27. It gives an account, *first* of the horses and chariots provided by Solomon for his own use, *then* of the manner in which they were procured, and *lastly* of the foreign trade in these articles which sprang up, and was managed by Solomon's agents. There is an evident allusion to this passage in Deut. xvii. 16, where the king of Israel is warned not to go back to Egypt for the purpose of multiplying horses.

26. The text has been very freely handled in the course of transmission, as is seen from a comparison with iv. 26, the two parallels in 2 Chronicles, and the LXX version of the various passages. Lucian's LXX goes so far as to make the verse say that Solomon kept forty thousand mares for breeding (similarly LXX (B) in ii. 46[l]).

27. in the lowland: 'in the Shephēlāh'; see G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.* p. 201 ff.

28. Read, 'Now the export of Solomon's horses was from

out of Egypt; and the king's merchants received them
in droves, each drove at a price. And a chariot came 29
up and went out of Egypt for six hundred *shekels* of
silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so for
all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria,
did they bring them out by their means.

[D] Now king Solomon loved many strange women, 11

Muṣri and from Ḳuë; the king's dealers brought them from Ḳuë for cash.' The important emendation—'from Muṣri and from Ḳuë'—is mainly due to the investigation of Winckler (see *KAT*³, p. 238); although the reading 'from Ḳuë' is supported by the Vulgate (*de Coa*) and other authorities, and had been anticipated by Lenormant. The countries named are now identified by Winckler with Cappadocia and Cilicia respectively, lying north and south of the Taurus range between Asia Minor and Syria. From this region the Persians of a later time are said to have obtained their horses; and the neighbouring Togarmah is the only horse-breeding district mentioned by Ezekiel (xxvii. 14) in his elaborate survey of the commerce of Tyre. The name *Muṣri* was easily confounded with *Miṣraim* (= Egypt). From Egypt, on the contrary, there seems never to have been any considerable export of horses.

29. Egypt. Read, as before, *Muṣri*. The prices are given differently by the LXX: viz. a chariot one hundred shekels and a horse fifty shekels. The silver shekel *weighed* a little more than half a crown of our money; but it must again be borne in mind that this conveys absolutely no idea of its purchasing price.

did they bring them out. Render, with LXX, 'were they exported.' The meaning would seem to be that Solomon bought at the same rate as the kings of the Hittites and of Syria. But for the expression **by their means**, which seems to refer to Solomon's dealers, we should hardly gather that this foreign trade passed through Hebrew hands.

xi. *The Troubles of Solomon's Reign.*

The chapter consists of two parts: (1) a recital of Solomon's religious delinquencies, followed by a threat of Divine judgement, verses 1–13; and (2) a record of the political troubles which clouded the prosperity of his reign, and were ominous of greater disasters in the future, verses 14–40. At first sight it might appear as if these two were related as cause and effect, or as sin and penalty; but a closer examination shows that this is neither true

together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the

in fact nor directly asserted by the compiler of the book. For it is expressly said on the one hand that Solomon's apostasy took place in his old age (verse 4), and, on the other, that the evils described in verses 14 ff. affected the whole of his reign (see verses 21 f., 25, 27). It is therefore incredible that the latter should be represented as the consequence of the former. Moreover, the compiler limits the punishment on Solomon's sin to the disruption of the kingdom (verse 11), which was an event still future, although no doubt the quarrel with Jeroboam was a providential preparation for it. Further light is thrown on the matter when we observe that the bulk of verses 14 ff. is taken from ancient historical sources; while verses 1–13 are almost wholly Deuteronomic. The matter thus resolves itself into a question of literary arrangement. The compiler is responsible for the *plan* which leads him to select from his sources the bright features of Solomon's reign and put these in the foreground, and then to crowd all the darker features into a few pages at the close. But he is not to be charged with the absurdity of presenting these disasters as the punishment of an offence not yet committed.

xi. 1–13. *Solomon's Polygamy and Apostasy.* In his old age Solomon allows his heart to be turned aside to idolatry by his too numerous foreign wives, whose impure cults he fosters by erecting sanctuaries to their deities in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. The Lord then speaks to him, and announces the dismemberment of the kingdom after his death, as the consequence of his unfaithfulness. Such is the argument of the section in its present form, which, as has been said, it owes to the Deuteronomic compiler. It is possible, with the help of the LXX, to recognize some traces of the original account, which briefly recorded the polygamy of Solomon and the erection of heathen shrines as historical facts, but without the comment of censure by which they are now accompanied. To this earlier document we may perhaps assign verses 1[a] and 7; but to reconstruct it as a consecutive narrative is an utterly hopeless undertaking.

1. The LXX opens more forcibly: 'Now Solomon was fond of women. And he had seven hundred princesses, and three hundred concubines. And he took foreign wives,' &c. Of these sentences, the second appears to be a gloss which has crept into the text in different places in the LXX and the Hebrew. The list of foreign nations which follows is given somewhat differently in the LXX.

together with . . . Pharaoh: referring back to iii. 1; the words are, however, quite possibly an interpolation, since the connexion is peculiar in form.

Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites;
of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the 2
children of Israel, Ye shall not go among them, neither
shall they come among you: for surely they will turn
away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto
these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, prin- 3
cesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives
turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when 4
Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart
after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the
LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.
For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the 5
Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the
Ammonites. And Solomon did that which was evil in 6
the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD,
as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an 7
high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, in
the mount that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech the

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2. come among you: i. e. have intercourse with you; cf. Joshua xxiii. 7 ff.

4. perfect with: cf. viii. 61, xv. 3, 14.

5. Ashtoreth, or Astarte, perhaps the most widely worshipped of the Semitic deities, and the original of the Greek Aphrodite, appears in many characters and in both sexes. As Istar among the Babylonians, and particularly the Assyrians, she appears very prominently as a war-goddess; but among the Phoenicians and Canaanites she was the female consort of Baal, and the goddess of fertility and sexual love. See Driver, in *DB*, i. p. 167 ff. Why she is called here specially **the goddess of the Zidonians** is not quite clear.

Milcom. See on verse 7.

abomination: cf. Deut. xxvii. 15, xxix. 17.

6. went not fully after: as Num. xiv. 24, xxxii. 12; Deut. i. 36.

7. Then. See on iii. 16. The idiom seems to indicate that the verse (apart from glosses), belongs to the primary source, though the word **abomination** has been substituted for the neutral 'god,' which was read by the LXX.

Chemosh and **Molech:** the national gods of the Moabites

8 abomination of the children of Ammon. And so did
he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and
sacrificed unto their gods.
9 And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his
heart was turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel,
10 which had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded
him concerning this thing, that he should not go after
other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD com-
11 manded. Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon,
Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not
kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have com-
manded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee,
12 and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy
days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake: but
13 I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I
will not rend away all the kingdom; but I will give one
tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake, and for
Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

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and Ammonites respectively. The former is named in that capacity on the Moabite Stone; the latter word means 'king,' and should be pronounced *Melek* or *Milk*, of which *Milcom* (verse 5) is a byform.

the mount is the Mount of Olives; and **before** means 'on the east side of.' This clause, however, is wanting in the LXX, and was probably added by a later hand.

8. which burned incense. Read, with LXX (L), 'burning and sacrificing to their gods': the subject of the verbs is Solomon himself.

9. was angry: as Deut. i. 37, iv. 21, ix. 8, 20.

appeared . . . twice: iii. 5–15 and ix. 1–9. But only on the second occasion was the warning against idolatry given, and then not addressed to Solomon personally, but to Israel generally.

12. In the O.T. the postponement of a calamity is always regarded as an exercise of clemency on the part of God: see xxi. 29.

13. one tribe. See on verse 33.

[S] And the LORD raised up an adversary unto 14
Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed
in Edom. For it came to pass, when David was in 15
Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to
bury the slain, and had smitten every male in Edom;

xi. 14–22 (+25b). *The Adventures of Hadad the Edomite.* An examination of this passage by Winckler (*Alttest. Unters.*, pp. 1–15) has made it highly probable that two ancient and independent narratives are here interwoven. (*a*) In one account Hadad is a member of the royal family of Edom, who when a little child was saved from a great massacre of Edomites by David, and brought to Egypt. There he was adopted by Tahpenes, the wife of Pharaoh, who brought him up with her own children. When he had reached manhood he heard of the death of David, and obtained permission to return to his own land, where he became king (verses 14, 15a*a*, b*β*, 17b, a*β*, 19, 20a*β*, b*β*, 21, 22, 25b). (*b*) In the other account Adad is a grown man who with a band of Edomites flees from an invading army under Joab, first to Midian, then to Paran, and ultimately to Egypt. Pharaoh there receives him with every mark of honour, and marries him to the sister of the queen Tahpenes; and the son she bears to him, Genubath, is reared in the palace (verses 15a*β*, 16a, 17a*α*γ, 18, 19b, 20a*a*, b*α*β). The relation of the two narratives to one another is uncertain. Winckler's view is that the Adad of (*b*), as distinct from the Hadad of (*a*), was a Midianite; and that his son Genubath afterwards reigned in Midian, as Hadad did in Edom. It is not impossible, however, that they are but two versions of the same incident, the escape and return of the Edomite prince. Although we believe the above analysis to be essentially sound, we must forgo the attempt to vindicate it within the narrow compass of the notes. (See Burney, p. 157 ff.)

14. The introductory verse may have been written by the compiler of Kings.

an adversary: Heb. *sāṭān*, a name frequently applied in the O. T. to a human opponent, and only in three passages to the great enemy and tempter of mankind (Job i, ii; Zech. iii. 1, 2; 1 Chron. xxi. 1).

15, 16. On David's subjugation of Edom see 2 Sam. viii. 13 (R. V. marg.). For **was in Edom** read 'smote Edom'; or (with LXX) 'extirpated Edom.' The expression **to bury the slain** presupposes some great defeat of the Israelites, the record of which has been entirely lost. In revenge for this an army under Joab occupied the country for six months, until they had extirpated the male population.

16 (for Joab and all Israel remained there six months, until
17 he had cut off every male in Edom;) that Hadad fled,
he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him,
18 to go into Egypt; Hadad being yet a little child. And
they arose out of Midian, and came to Paran: and they
took men with them out of Paran, and they came to
Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him
an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him
19 land. And Hadad found great favour in the sight of
Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his
20 own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen. And the
sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom
Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath

17. Hadad. In this instance alone the Hebrew text reads *'Adad*. This might, of course, be a scribal error; but it may also be an indication of diversity of authorship. For **to go into Egypt** LXX has 'and came to Egypt.'

a little child. The incongruity of this notice with what follows in verse 18 f. is apparent.

18. they arose out of Midian. Midian is quite off the route from Edom to Egypt; to save the consistency of the narrative it would be almost necessary to substitute Midian for Egypt in verse 17. But the real explanation doubtless lies in the composite structure of the passage.

Paran is the name of the great wilderness lying between the Sinaitic peninsula, Edom and Palestine. The reason for these devious wanderings of the fugitives is left unexplained.

19. The awkward style of the latter part of the verse is surprising on any view of the origin of the passage. It is probable that the proper name of the princess married to Hadad is disguised in the first occurrence of the word for **sister,** and has been preserved in a similar notice inserted by the LXX in the history of Jeroboam (xii. 24^{e}). Many commentators accordingly read *'Anôth* for *'āhôth* (sister); and Kittel, who defends the integrity of the narrative, renders: 'gave him Anoth the elder (so LXX) sister of his wife Tahpenes.' But the real source of the confusion probably lies again in the dual narrative.

20. weaned. Read, with LXX, 'reared.' Note the double statement in the verse as to the education of a boy with the royal family. In the original documents the first of them presumably referred to the infant Hadad and the second to Genubath.

was in Pharaoh's house among the sons of Pharaoh.
And when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with 21
his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was
dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, Let me depart, that I may
go to mine own country. Then Pharaoh said unto him, 22
But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold, thou
seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered,
Nothing: howbeit let me depart in any wise.

And God raised up *another* adversary unto him, Rezon 23
the son of Eliada, which had fled from his lord Hadadezer
king of Zobah: and he gathered men unto him, and 24
became captain over a troop, when David slew them

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22. The abrupt ending of the Hebrew misses the whole point of the story. Fortunately, the original conclusion has been preserved intact by the LXX. After verse 22 we have to read: 'And Hadad returned to his country. This is the evil that Hadad did; and he oppressed Israel, and reigned over Edom.' The last sentence is found in the Hebrew at the close of the Rezon story, where it is entirely out of place (see verse 25); and in order to adjust it to its new connexion Edom was changed to 'Aram' (Syria). In the LXX the Rezon episode is thrust into the middle of verse 14. It looks as if it had been a later addition to the chapter, which in both recensions has violently disturbed the context.

xi. 23–25[a]. *Rezon the Aramaean.* The career of this northern adventurer is more briefly narrated, but was of even more fatal import for the future of Israel than that of Hadad. Rezon was a servant of Hadadezer of Zobah, and found his opportunity when David crushed that petty Syrian state. He became for a time a captain of banditti; but eventually captured Damascus and established himself there as king. What is here recorded appears to be nothing less than the foundation of the powerful Aramaean kingdom of Damascus, which was destined to be the most formidable rival and enemy of Israel during the next two centuries, till it was crushed by the advance of the Assyrians.

23. Zobah. On David's conquest of this kingdom, and its previous relations with Damascus and Ammon, see 2 Sam. viii. 3 ff., x. 1–14: cf. Winckler's *Gesch. Israels*, i. p. 138 ff.

24. captain over a troop: or 'roving band' (cf. 2 Sam. iv. 2), i. e. a bandit chieftain, as David had once been.

of Zobah: and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein,
25 and reigned in Damascus. And he was an adversary to
Israel all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that
Hadad *did*: and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over
Syria.

26 [KI] And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite
of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name

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when David . . . Zobah. These words are wanting in the LXX, and are probably a gloss to verse 23.

they went to Damascus: better, as LXX, 'he captured Damascus' (by surprise), with the two following verbs in sing. (LXX (L)).

25. an adversary to . . . Solomon: the natural conclusion of the narrative. Thus a second large tract of territory was detached from the Davidic empire.

On the remainder of the verse see above on verse **22**. **beside** is a slight corruption of the original 'This[1].'

xi. 26–40. *The Antecedents of Jeroboam.* Jeroboam, the future leader of the northern tribes, comes on the scene as a young Ephraimite of lowly origin who had entered the royal service. During the building of the Millo Solomon observed his ability, and promoted him to the difficult post of overseer of the labour-bands of Ephraim. Soon afterwards the prophet Ahijah came across his path, and forecast his future eminence, doubtless implanting the seeds of disaffection in his ambitious mind. The affair came to the knowledge of Solomon, who sought to put him out of the way; but Jeroboam found protection with Shishak, king of Egypt, till Solomon's death. The first portion of the narrative and its conclusion (verses 26–31, 40) belong to an ancient source, of which xii. 1–20 is probably the continuation. Verses 32–39, on the other hand, are full of Deuteronomic phraseology, and are in the main from the hand of the compiler. This has caused a lacuna in the original version of the narrative, which may perhaps partly be supplied from a parallel history of Jeroboam preserved by the LXX in xii. 24^{a-z}. But the treatment of the story of Jeroboam in the LXX is very peculiar, and raises a literary problem of great perplexity; see Appendix, Note II.

26. Zeredah, the birthplace of Jeroboam, is mentioned only

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[1] *Read* זאת *for* וְאֵת.

was Zeruah, a widow woman, he also lifted up his hand against the king. And this was the cause that he lifted 27
up his hand against the king: Solomon built Millo, and repaired the breach of the city of David his father. And 28
the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon saw the young man that he was industrious, and he gave him charge over all the labour of the house of Joseph. And it came to pass at that time, when 29
Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; now *Ahijah* had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field. And Ahijah laid hold of the new garment 30
that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces. And he 31

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here in the Hebrew: LXX always reads *Sareira*, and says it was 'in the mountain of Ephraim.' The locality has not been identified.

whose mother's name . . . woman. Read, with LXX, 'the son of a widow woman.' *Ẓerû'ah* means 'leprous,' and was no doubt invented to express the hatred of the later Jews towards the maker of the golden calves. For the same reason she is called a harlot in the duplicate narrative of the LXX (xii. 24^b).

27. this was the cause that: or, 'these were the circumstances under which,' &c.

built the Millo: see on ix. 15.

and repaired: better, 'closing up the breach,' &c.

28. a mighty man: a capable man; see on i. 42.

industrious: *lit.* 'a doer of work,' a man of push and intelligence who got things carried through.

the labour: or, 'burden.' The word undoubtedly denotes the forced labour of v. 13, ix. 15, 23; though the technical term (*mas*) of the annalistic sources is not employed.

29. Ahijah the Shilonite: a native of Shiloh, the modern *Seilun*, north of Beth-el, which was therefore still at this time an inhabited place: cf. Jer. xli. 5 with vii. 12 ff.

found him in the way: LXX adds rightly, 'and took him aside from the way'; see the last clause of the verse, and cf. 1 Sam. ix. 27.

a new garment: put on by the prophet for the purpose of the symbolical act about to be performed.

30. rent it in twelve pieces: symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel. Twelve was the ideal fixed number of the tribes, which

said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith
the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the
32 kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten
tribes to thee: [D] (but he shall have one tribe, for my
servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city
which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)
33 because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped
Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the
god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the children of
Ammon; and they have not walked in my ways, to do
that which is right in mine eyes, and *to keep* my statutes
34 and my judgements, as did David his father. Howbeit
I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but

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expressed the unity of the nation. The enumeration varied according as Ephraim and Manasseh were reckoned as one tribe (Joseph) or two: in the latter case, the landless tribe of Levi was excluded from the number. Here the old document assigns ten tribes to Jeroboam, and therefore (apparently) leaves to Solomon's son the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin. In verses 32, 36, however, only one tribe (Judah) is left to the house of David; and this view is shown to be historically accurate by xii. 20. The difficulty cannot be quite satisfactorily explained. It would be easy to imagine an enumeration which gave only ten tribes to Jeroboam and left one to David; but no ingenuity can make out that 10 + 1 = 12.

32. See verse 13. The Deuteronomic addition commences here: cf. the last clause with Deut. xii. 5, 11, xiv. 23, xv. 20, &c.; and 1 Kings viii. 16, xiv. 21; 2 Kings xxi. 7. The compiler's hand is manifest in the phrases **for my servant David's sake** (verses 12 f., xv. 4; 2 Kings viii. 19, xix. 34, xx. 6) and **chosen out of all the tribes of Israel** (see the passages just cited).

33. On **Ashtoreth, Chemosh,** and **Milcom,** see verses 5, 7.

34. the whole kingdom. The proper antithesis to this is the 'one tribe' of verse 36. The mitigation of Solomon's punishment is twofold: (*a*) I will not take the kingdom out of *his* hand, but out of the hand of his son; and (*b*) I will not take away the *whole* kingdom, but will leave one tribe. In the text the two points are somewhat awkwardly confused, but it is scarcely advisable to smooth away the irregularity by omitting the word 'whole.'

I will make him prince all the days of his life, for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes: but I will take the 35 kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. And unto his son will I give one tribe, 36 that David my servant may have a lamp alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there. And I will take thee, and thou 37 shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. And it shall be, if thou wilt 38 hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in mine eyes, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and will build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee. And I will for this afflict the seed of David, 39

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35. even ten tribes. Read, 'the ten tribes.' The definite article suggests that the expression had come to be used as a standing designation of the northern kingdom.

36. may have a lamp alway: cf. xv. 4; 2 Kings viii. 19; 2 Chron. xxi. 7: and for the figure, Job xviii. 6; Prov. xiii. 9, xx. 20; Jer. xxv. 10. The image is taken from the custom of keeping a lamp constantly burning in the tent or house, a custom said to be observed by the Fellaheen of Palestine at the present day. The extinction of the light signifies the breaking up of the home and the destruction of the family.

37. king over Israel: in the narrower (and older) sense, as contrasted with Judah.

38. will build thee a sure house. Jeroboam has the making or marring of the dynasty in his hands; if he emulates the piety of David his kingdom may be equally permanent. The words are written, however, from the standpoint of an age which looks back on the establishment of David's house as an accomplished fact, and knows that the religious conditions had not been fulfilled by Jeroboam. The last words, **and will give Israel unto thee,** are to be deleted, along with the whole of verse 39, as the interpolation of a later reader. The clauses are wanting in the LXX.

40 but not for ever. [KI] Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam: but Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

41 [D] Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book
42 of the acts of Solomon? And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.
43 And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

12 [KI] And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel

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40 concludes the original account of Jeroboam's rupture with Solomon. On the additional particulars recorded in the parallel of the LXX, see Appendix, Note II.

Shishak king of Egypt: see on xiv. 25 ff.

xi. 41–43. *Editorial Notice of Solomon's Death.* An instalment of the 'framework' of the compiler: see Introd., p. 10 ff.

41. On **the book of the acts of Solomon** see Introd., p. 25; and the note on ch. iii–xi, p. 82.

42. The notice of the duration of reign belongs properly to the introductory formula; but that was in the case of Solomon incomplete.

43. See on ii. 10. Between the mention of Solomon's burial and Rehoboam's accession the LXX inserts a notice of Jeroboam's return from Egypt to his native town of Sareira, in the following terms: 'And when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard it—he being still in Egypt, whither he had fled from the face of Solomon, and had dwelt in Egypt—he returned and went to his city Sareira, which is in Mount Ephraim; and king Solomon slept with his fathers.' See further on xii. 2, and Appendix, Note II.

HISTORY OF THE DIVIDED MONARCHY.
1 Kings xii—2 Kings xvii.

xii. 1—xiv. 20. *Jeroboam I of Israel.*

xii. 1–20. *The Revolt of the Northern Tribes.* The narrative opens abruptly with the mention of Rehoboam's visit to Shechem, where a national assembly had been convened, under circumstances which are not related, for the purpose of confirming his succession.

were come to Shechem to make him king. And it came 2
to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it,

A deputation waits on the new monarch, and tenders him the allegiance of the people, but only on condition that the oppressive yoke of Solomon's government is lightened; and Rehoboam promises an answer at the end of three days. Having meanwhile taken counsel, first with the experienced statesmen who had stood round the throne of his father, and then with his own juvenile and foolish companions, he decides to follow the reckless advice of the latter: he accordingly meets the people on the third day with an arrogant and contemptuous refusal of their demands. The insolent bearing of the king rouses the spirit of the tribesmen, who renounce allegiance to the house of David; and give an earnest of the temper they are in by stoning to death the hated minister of the *corvée*. Rehoboam flees in hot haste to Jerusalem; and the assembly proceeds to the election of a king, its choice naturally falling on Jeroboam who has just returned from Egypt. At this point, however, the ancient cleavage between north and south declares itself: the tribe of Judah remains faithful to the Davidic dynasty, while Jeroboam establishes his dominion over the more independent and vigorous tribes of the north.

The first impression produced by this narrative is that its author was in sympathy with the revolt, and therefore presumably a native of north Israel. That impression is confirmed by the fact that the writer acquiesces, as a Judaean chronicler would scarcely have done, in the idea that the nation had still the right to elect its own sovereign (see p. 57 f.). The conclusion may not be absolutely certain; the passage displays something of the same neutral and dispassionate treatment of events which we have observed in ch. i, ii. There are, indeed, some unmistakable literary affinities with 2 Sam. ix–xx, which have led Wellhausen and others to attribute it, if not to the same author, at least to one who, like him, belonged to the southern kingdom. We have no assurance, however, that 2 Sam. ix–xx, 1 Kings i, ii was written by a Judaean; and, on the whole, it seems probable that both here and in xi. 26 ff. we have an extract from the chronicles of the Kings of Israel, whose author was acquainted with the 'Court History' of 2 Sam. ix ff. The phrase 'unto this day' in verse 19 shows that it is not contemporary with the incidents related. See further, Appendix, p. 446.

1. Shechem: now *Nābulus*, at the north-east foot of Mount Gerizim. From the days of the patriarchs downwards Shechem was both religiously and politically one of the most important cities in O. T. history, and was afterwards selected by Jeroboam as the capital of his kingdom (verse 25).

(for he was yet in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt,
3 and they sent and called him;) that Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Re-
4 hoboam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter,
5 and we will serve thee. And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people
6 departed. And king Rehoboam took counsel with the old men, that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, What counsel give ye me to return

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all ... Israel: including Judah. The idea seems to be that the demand for the redress of grievances came from the whole nation; it was only when they came to the election of a king that the schism between Israel and Judah appeared (verse 20). The original document must have contained some explanation of the reasons which led to this extraordinary convention. The parallel account of the LXX (xx. 24 [h]) says the assembly was convened by Jeroboam, who had returned from Egypt and fortified himself in his native town of Sareira (24 [f]). The explanation is in itself intelligible; but it is irreconcileable with the presuppositions of this narrative (see on verse 20).

2, 3 [a] (to 'came') ought to be omitted, with LXX. Verse 2 is inserted by the LXX in a still more unsuitable place (see on xi. 43); but the truth is that the notice does not belong to the present narrative at all. The fact of Jeroboam's return is, of course, assumed; but he takes no part in the proceedings.

3 [b]. Read, accordingly, 'and they spake'; or, as LXX, 'and the people spake.'

4. made our yoke grievous. The yoke is a natural emblem of servitude, which may be easy and reasonable (as Jer. v. 5, Matt. xi. 30), or (more commonly) galling and intolerable (Deut. xxviii. 48; Isa. ix. 4; Jer. xxviii. 14, and often). The people do not here ask for an entire remission of their burdens, but only for a relaxation of the more oppressive imposts and services—the taxation and forced labour that were crushing the life out of them.

5. yet for three days: better, as LXX, 'until (the end of) three days.'

answer to this people? And they spake unto him, saying, 7
If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and
wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words
to them, then they will be thy servants for ever. But he 8
forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given
him, and took counsel with the young men that were
grown up with him, that stood before him. And he said 9
unto them, What counsel give ye, that we may return
answer to this people, who have spoken to me, saying,
Make the yoke that thy father did put upon us lighter?
And the young men that were grown up with him spake 10
unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou say unto this people
that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke
heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou
speak unto them, My little finger is thicker than my
father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you 11
with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father
chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with
scorpions. So Jeroboam and all the people came to 12
Rehoboam the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come

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7. wilt be a servant... they will be thy servants. The counsel of the old men does not seem to look beyond the exigencies of the moment; they recommend a politic and conciliatory answer, but not necessarily a considerate administration.

8. the young men: *lit.* 'boys'—a contemptuous and hyperbolical expression, which is surprising if Rehoboam was at the time forty-one years of age (xiv. 21). The parallel in LXX (B) (xii. 24ᵃ) makes him, however, only sixteen at his accession.

10, 11. The two metaphors—the little finger thicker than the loins, and scorpions as contrasted with whips—were of a kind to live in the memory of a high-spirited and liberty-loving people.

scorpions. The same name is said to have been given by the Romans to an implement of flagellation. It is described by Ephrem Syrus as a long bag of leather, stuffed with sand, and provided with spikes (Thenius).

12. Omit **Jeroboam,** and read with LXX, 'And all Israel came' (see above on verses 2, 3).

13 to me again the third day. And the king answered the
people roughly, and forsook the counsel of the old men
14 which they had given him; and spake to them after the
counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your
yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke: my father chas-
tised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.
15 So the king hearkened not unto the people; for it was
a thing brought about of the LORD, that he might
establish his word, which the LORD spake by the hand
of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.
16 And when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not
unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What
portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance
in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to
thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their
17 tents. [Z] But as for the children of Israel which dwelt
in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.
18 [KI] Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over

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15. a thing brought about: Heb. 'a turn'—of Providence; as we speak of 'a turn of fortune.'

16. What portion have we? Cf. 2 Sam. xx. 1, where the war-cry is sounded in almost identical terms by Sheba the Benjamite, when he headed the last great revolt of Israelites against the Davidic monarchy. The expression **to your tents, O Israel** is doubtless a reminiscence of the nomadic life; and it is tempting to suppose that it means to take the field in readiness for a campaign. But no evidence can be found in support of this interpretation; the tent is always simply a synonym for the private dwelling, and therefore we must understand the phrase here as a signal for dispersion, and refusal to obey the call to united action. Hence the last clause, **So Israel departed unto their tents,** is either a gloss, or it describes the final upshot of the proceedings.

17 is a late interpolation which is wanting in the LXX: it is perhaps based on the representation of 2 Chron. xi. 16 f., where we read that pious Israelites from the north became naturalized in Judah, in order to worship God according to the law.

18. Adoram (= Adoniram), **who was over the levy.** See on iv. 6, and v. 14. The sending of this unpopular official to quell

the levy; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. And king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel rebelled 19
against the house of David, unto this day. And it came 20
to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was returned, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

[D?] And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, 21

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the revolt shows how little Rehoboam and his youthful advisers understood the gravity of the situation. Only a speedy flight saves Rehoboam from the infuriated people.

19. unto this day. The event was long remembered as the greatest disaster that had ever befallen the house of David: Isa. vii. 17.

20. Jeroboam may have been pulling the wires behind the scenes, but it is only now, and probably after some little interval, that he steps on to the stage and attains the goal of his ambition.

the tribe of Judah only. The LXX adds, 'and Benjamin,' in accordance with verses 21, 23; but there can be no doubt that the Hebrew represents the older and more accurate tradition. Jerusalem was in the territory of Benjamin, and some Benjamite families must have been incorporated in the southern kingdom; but the *tribe* of Benjamin as a whole went with the north. See on xi. 30.

xii. 21-24. *Civil War averted by a Prophet's Message.* Rehoboam's first concern is to recover by force what his ill-advised action had lost. On his return to Jerusalem he sets about raising a great army in order to subdue his rebellious subjects. But the enterprise is at once abandoned at the instance of the prophet Shemaiah, who shows that it is contrary to the will of Yahweh. The verses are clearly not homogeneous with the preceding section—contrast the inclusion of Benjamin in Rehoboam's kingdom with the explicit statement of verse 20; and they present a view of things hardly consistent with the annalistic notice in xiv. 30, which says there was constant warfare between Jeroboam and Rehoboam. The passage belongs to a series of prophetic narratives, which illustrate the influence of the prophets on the policy of the kings. There is nothing to show whether it was inserted by the compiler.

he assembled all the house of Judah, and the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son
22 of Solomon. But the word of God came unto Shemaiah
23 the man of God, saying, Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people,
24 saying, Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is of me. So they hearkened unto the word of the LORD, and returned and went their way, according to the word of the LORD.

25 [KI D] Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill

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22. Shemaiah is otherwise unknown, although in the parallel narrative of the LXX (xii. 24[o]) he is the prophet who figures in the mantle-rending incident instead of Ahijah the Shilonite.

the man of God: the most general O. T. designation of the prophet. It appears never to be applied to any but prophets, or men regarded as prophets. In Judges xiii. 6, 8 we may suppose that the angel appeared in the guise of a prophet.

[Between verse 24 and verse 25 the LXX has a long addition (xii. 24[a–z], in Swete), on which see Appendix, Note II.]

xii. 25–33. *Incidents of Jeroboam's Reign.* (1) The fortification of Shechem on the west, and Penuel on the east, of the Jordan, verse 25; (2) the institution of the calf-worship of Beth-el and Dan, a measure prompted by fear lest the superior prestige of the temple at Jerusalem should maintain the religious unity of Israel, and thereby undo the political effects of the revolution, verses 26–30; (3) the appointment of a non-Levitical priesthood for the northern sanctuaries, verse 31; and (4) the fixing of the autumn festival in the eighth month, verse 32. The section is of mixed origin: the notices are mostly such as might have come ultimately from the annals of the northern kingdom; but they have been partly recast in the process of compilation.

25. Shechem (see on verse 1) was a natural place to choose as a capital, both from its historic importance and because of the part it had played in the revolt.

country of Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and he went out from thence, and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in 26
his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: if this people go up to offer sacrifices in the 27
house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah; and they shall kill me, and return to Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took 28
counsel, and made two calves of gold; and he said unto

Penuel was on the east of the Jordan, near the Jabbok (Gen. xxxii. 31 f.; Judges viii. 8 f.); but its site has not been discovered. The clause **he went out from thence** can only refer to a transference of the seat of government to the trans-Jordanic region, a change which must have been due to some unrecorded troubles of Jeroboam's reign. It has been plausibly conjectured that it was a consequence of Shishak's invasion (see on xiv. 25); but the hypothesis loses much of its attractiveness if it be the case that Penuel itself was one of the cities conquered by Shishak.

26, 27 are assigned by some critics to one of the compilers, but without adequate reason. It is quite credible that even at this early period the temple at Jerusalem had come to be regarded as the chief centre of national worship, and had begun to attract pilgrims from all parts of the country. In such circumstances Jeroboam would have good reason to view with misgiving its rivalry with the ancient sanctuaries of the north, and its influence over the minds of his subjects.

27. and return ... Judah: may be omitted with the LXX.

28. two calves of gold. The images were probably in the form of a young ox; the name 'calves' seems to have been an epithet of derision coined by opponents of this species of idolatry, suggested by the diminutive size of the images. The origin of this symbol of Yahweh is still somewhat obscure. That it was an imitation of the Apis- or Mnevis-cult introduced by Jeroboam from Egypt, or surviving among the people since the time of the Exodus (Exod. xxxii), is little probable, the difference being too fundamental between the worship of a living animal as the incarnation of the Deity and the use of an image as His symbol. There is most to be said for the view that the ox was an ancient Semitic emblem of divinity, known to the Israelites especially through the Canaanites, whose Baal is associated with the figure of the ox. In the Babylonian religion the ox was the sacred animal of the Syrian and Babylonian thunder-god Ramman,

them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of
29 the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Beth-el, and
30 the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went *to worship* before the one, even unto
31 Dan. And he made houses of high places, and made priests from among all the people, which were not of the
32 sons of Levi. [Z] And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the

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and might easily have been transferred to the worship of Yahweh (*KAT*^{3}, p. 449 f.). It is in keeping with the conservative tendency of Jeroboam's religious policy to suppose that his innovation consisted in giving legal sanction to a type of worship already known and practised in certain sanctuaries of his realm.

he said unto them. Read, with LXX, 'to the people.'

It is too much. Rather, 'Ye need no longer go up,' &c. (see margin).

behold thy gods. Cf. the words of Aaron in Exod. xxxii. 4, 8. The formula has evidently been borrowed in the one passage from the other; but which of the two is original it is difficult to decide. If any stress could be laid on the plural, the decision must be in favour of this verse (since only one calf was made by Aaron); but the construction of the word God (plural of eminence) with a plural verb, though unusual, is not without parallel.

29. Beth-el (*Beitīn*, ten miles north of Jerusalem) and **Dan** (in the extreme north, near one of the sources of the Jordan, see on xv. 20) were two sanctuaries of immemorial antiquity.

30. the people went . . . Dan. The text is evidently incomplete. We should probably read, 'And the people went before the one to Beth-el, and before the other to Dan' (so Burney). Kittel, on the other hand, omits the first half of the verse as a gloss, and takes the rest as a continuation of verse 29, rendering: 'And the people marched before the one as far as Dan;' i. e. conducted the image, in a solemn procession, to its future resting-place.

31. houses of high places: i. e. probably, temples in the already existing high places (see on iii. 2).

from among all the people: 'from the masses of the people.' This was in accordance with early usage (cf. 1 Sam. i. 1 ff., 2 Sam. viii. 18, xx. 26). But the preference of Levites for priests, implied in the second half of the verse, is also in accordance with early ideas (Judges xvii. 13).

32. The feast referred to is the Feast of Ingathering or of

eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he went up unto the altar; so did he in Beth-el, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places which he had made. And he went 33
up unto the altar which he had made in Beth-el on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart: and he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and went up unto the altar, to burn incense.

And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah 13

Tabernacles: see on viii. 2. The expression **like unto the feast that is in Judah** shows that a general regulation, and not a single observance, is meant. The fixing of this festival in the eighth month probably stereotyped the local custom of the north: whether it be correctly attributed to Jeroboam is another question. The writer has in view the divergence between the Israelitish and (later) Judaean practice; and traces it to the schismatic policy of Jeroboam.

and he went up. The text here is in some confusion. Since this clause is resumed at the beginning of verse 33 it is probable that the intervening words have been interpolated, under the mistaken impression that the reference is to Jeroboam's habitual practice, and not to a particular occasion. The truth is, however, that verse 33 is a transition verse, added to introduce the episode of the next chapter, and describing with much circumlocution the precise situation in which the message of the prophet was delivered.

xiii. 1–34. *The Man of God from Judah.* The narrative consists of two parts: (1) The scene before the altar at Beth-el, where the king's illegal sacrifice is interrupted by the oracle of an unnamed man of God from Judah, which is accompanied by a miraculous sign: Jeroboam's arm being paralysed, but healed immediately on the intercession of the prophet. The latter refuses a reward, on the ground that he is under a strict injunction neither to eat bread nor drink water in the land, but to return to his own country by another way, verses 1–10. (2) Then follows the account of how he was induced to violate his instructions by an old prophet of Beth-el, who persuaded him to accept his hospitality on the pretext that the invitation was inspired by the word of the Lord. For this act of disobedience the man of God is slain by a lion on the

by the word of the LORD unto Beth-el: and Jeroboam
2 was standing by the altar to burn incense. And he cried
against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said,

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way home, and is afterwards buried in the grave of the prophet who had led him astray, verses 11–32.

The whole story, but especially the latter part, is amongst the strangest in the O. T. As indications of a comparatively late date the following facts are pointed out: (*a*) the anonymity of the principal personages; (*b*) the anachronism of the reference to Samaria as a *province* (verse 32), whereas in the time of Jeroboam the *city* itself was not yet built (see xvi. 34); (*c*) the specific and detailed prognostication of an unimportant incident 350 years before fulfilment (verse 2), which is without analogy in the authentic records of Hebrew prophecy; (*d*) the mechanical conception of revelation implied in the hypostatizing of the 'word of the Lord' (verses 1, 2, 5, 9, 17, 18, 32); and (*e*) the non-ethical view of the prophet's relation to his own message, which is so conspicuous in the latter part of the chapter. These features, together with traces of decadence in the style, point to the conclusion that the passage is of late composition, and has been inserted in the book at a time long subsequent to the Deuteronomic redaction. What kernel of historic fact lies beneath the narrative it is quite impossible to determine. Wellhausen's conjecture that it arose out of the mission of Amos to Beth-el under the second Jeroboam has little to recommend it except its ingenuity. More probably it is based on some local tradition which came to light at the time when Josiah destroyed the sanctuary of Beth-el (2 Kings xxiii. 16–18).

1. by the word of the LORD. The idea that the word of Yahweh as uttered by a prophet possesses a self-fulfilling energy is a genuine element of the prophetic theology (see Isa. ix. 8, &c.); but the representation throughout this chapter goes much further. The 'word' is conceived as a real mediating agency in the prophet's own intercourse with God. It is hardly too much to say that we have here an anticipation of the later doctrine of the *Logos* (*Mêmrā*), as a being intermediate between God and the world.

2. See on 2 Kings xxiii. 15–20. Even the most conservative commentators feel the difficulty that lies in the announcement of Josiah so many centuries before his birth, and endeavour to get rid of it by deleting the proper name, or resolving it into something more general (Köhler, Keil, Klostermann). But the naming of Josiah is quite in keeping with the character of the prediction as a whole, and nothing is gained by attempting to minimize so marked a feature.

O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD: Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he sacrifice the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall they burn upon thee. And he gave a sign the same day, 3
saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken: Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out. And it came to pass, when 4
the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar in Beth-el, that Jeroboam put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not draw it back again to him. The altar 5
also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. And the king answered and 6
said unto the man of God, Intreat now the favour of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God intreated the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before. And the king said unto 7
the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. And the man of God 8

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3. the ashes. The Hebrew word (*dēshen* = 'fatness') denotes technically the products of combustion of the fat and flesh of animals (Jer. xxxi. 40). These had to be carefully collected from the altar, and deposited in a clean place (Lev. vi. 10, 11, &c.); and the neglect of this precaution would seem to have been equivalent to the desecration of the altar.

4. The withering of Jeroboam's arm is an absolute miracle, which is not to be explained away as merely a natural consequence of the other miracle—the rending of the altar.

6. Intreat now the favour: *lit.* 'soften (*or*, make placid) the face,' i. e. 'propitiate' (Job xi. 19; 1 Sam. xiii. 12, and often).

7 ff. illustrate the fidelity of the man of God to his commission, which is proof against everything but downright deception.

said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house,
I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor
9 drink water in this place: for so was it charged me by
the word of the LORD, saying, Thou shalt eat no bread,
nor drink water, neither return by the way that thou
10 camest. So he went another way, and returned not by
the way that he came to Beth-el.
11 Now there dwelt an old prophet in Beth-el; and one
of his sons came and told him all the works that the man
of God had done that day in Beth-el: the words which
he had spoken unto the king, them also they told unto
12 their father. And their father said unto them, What
way went he? Now his sons had seen what way the
13 man of God went, which came from Judah. And he
said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled
14 him the ass: and he rode thereon. And he went after

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8. If thou wilt give: cf. the words of Balaam, Num. xxii. 18, xxiv. 13.

10. another way: probably in order to evade pursuit: at any rate, in scrupulous compliance with his directions.

11. an old prophet. The distinction between 'man of God' and 'prophet' (see on xii. 22) is consistently maintained in the remainder of the chapter, the former designation being regularly used of the Judaean prophet, and the latter of the Samaritan. 'Man of God' is obviously regarded as the higher title, and 'prophet' as the lower; but wherein precisely the difference lies does not appear. It might conceivably be a reminiscence of what was in the mind of Amos when he repudiated the professional name of *nābî'* (prophet, see Amos vii. 14). The passage is written to inculcate the duty of unswerving literal obedience to a Divine command; and there is no doubt that the lesson is conveyed with some psychological insight, though the motive of the diabolical conduct of the aged prophet remains mysterious.

one of his sons. The text has simply 'his son' (as marg.), but it is necessary to read the plural, as LXX, &c.

12. Now his sons had seen: marg. 'And his sons shewed him.' This reading involves only the change of a single vowel-point, and is undoubtedly to be preferred.

the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak:
and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that
camest from Judah? And he said, I am. Then he 15
said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread.
And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with 16
thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee
in this place: for it was said to me by the word of the 17
LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there,
nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest. And 18
he said unto him, I also am a prophet as thou art; and
an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying,
Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may
eat bread and drink water. *But* he lied unto him. So 19
he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house,
and drank water. And it came to pass, as they sat at 20
the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the
prophet that brought him back: and he cried unto the 21
man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith
the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast been disobedient
unto the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the com-

14. an oak: 'the terebinth' (see marg.), possibly the one that marked the grave of Deborah (Gen. xxxv. 8).

16. The words **nor go in with thee,** and again **with thee,** are wanting in the LXX.

18. a prophet as thou art. The speaker is naturally ignorant of the distinction referred to above (verse 11).

an angel spake unto me. Angels first appear as intermediaries of *prophetic* announcements in Ezekiel and Zechariah.

he lied unto him. The only fault of the man of God was believing the lie, i. e. trusting the second-hand revelation of another man rather than that which had come directly to himself.

20. At table the deceitful prophet receives a genuine revelation, which he is compelled to declare, it is to be hoped with sincere compunction.

21. hast been disobedient unto ('hast rebelled against') **the mouth of the LORD.** The strong expression is similarly used of the formal breach of a positive command in the case of Moses and Aaron at Meribah (Num. xx. 24, xxvii. 14).

mandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee,
22 but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water
in the place of the which he said to thee, Eat no bread,
and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the
23 sepulchre of thy fathers. And it came to pass, after he
had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled
for him the ass, *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had
24 brought back. And when he was gone, a lion met him
by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the
way, and the ass stood by it; the lion also stood by the
25 carcase. And, behold, men passed by, and saw the car-
case cast in the way, and the lion standing by the car-
case: and they came and told it in the city where the
26 old prophet dwelt. And when the prophet that brought
him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the
man of God, who was disobedient unto the mouth of the
LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the

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22. On the disgrace of being buried apart from the family sepulchre, see the instance of Uriah (Jer. xxvi. 23): cf. Gen. xlvii. 30, l. 25; Isa. xiv. 18 ff.

23. to wit, **for the prophet.** Here alone the man of God from Judah is called a prophet: but the word is shown to be a gloss by the awkward construction, and by its omission in the LXX, which of the whole clause retains but the single phrase 'and he returned.' This, along with the first word of the next verse, means: 'and he departed again, [and a lion, &c.].'

24. The effect of the lesson is heightened by another miracle: the lion and the ass stand peaceably together for some hours over the body of the dead man. Klostermann completely misunderstands the spirit of the passage when he tries to eliminate the supernatural, and makes the verse say merely that the ass remained and grazed and plucked herbs beside the corpse!

25. in the city where. The vagueness is remarkable; it has been already said that the old prophet dwelt in Beth-el. Klostermann ingeniously proposes to read: 'in the gate where the old prophet was sitting,' the gate being the place of public resort, where news was discussed.

26 b, 27 are wanting in the original LXX.

lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake unto him. And 27 he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled it. And he went and found his carcase 28 cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn the ass. And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of 29 God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and he came to the city of the old prophet, to mourn, and to bury him. And he laid his carcase in his own grave; 30 and they mourned over him, *saying*, Alas, my brother! And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he 31 spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones. For the saying which he 32 cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.

After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil 33 way, but made again from among all the people priests of the high places: [D] whosoever would, he consecrated him, that there might be priests of the high places. And 34

29ᵇ, 30ᵃ. The LXX here reads more tersely, and probably more correctly: 'and the prophet brought him back to the city to bury him in his own sepulchre.'

30ᵇ. Alas, my brother! the customary wail for the dead: cf. Jer. xxii. 18.

31, 32. For the fulfilment, see 2 Kings xxiii. 16–18.

the cities of Samaria. See above, p. 194.

33ᵃ is a repetition of the statement of xii. 31, inserted by the author of the long interpolation, in order to resume the main narrative.

33ᵇ, 34 are the original continuation of xii. 31, and are from the hand of the compiler.

consecrated him: *lit.* 'filled his hand,' the technical expression for the installation of a priest (Exod. xxviii. 41; Judges xvii. 5, 12, &c.). The same phrase occurs in Assyrian (*mûllû ḳâtâ*),

this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.

14 [KI] At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell
2 sick. And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam: and get thee to Shiloh; behold, there is Ahijah the prophet, which spake concerning me that
3 I should be king over this people. And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go

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with the figurative sense of 'putting one in charge of something' (Delitzsch, *Handwörterbuch*).

that there might be priests: better, as LXX, 'and he' (whosoever would) 'became a priest,' &c.

xiv. 1–18. *Sickness and Death of Abijah the Son of Jeroboam.* Jeroboam sends his wife, disguised as a common woman, to consult Ahijah the Shilonite regarding the fate of their sick child. The prophet, now an old blind man, penetrates her disguise, and anticipates her question by foretelling the death of the child. But this is prefaced by a denunciation of the sin of Jeroboam and a prophecy of the extinction of his whole house; and followed by an announcement of the final overthrow of the kingdom he had founded. The section closes with an account of the death of the child, in accordance with the prediction.

The passage in its present form consists of an ancient narrative (verses 1–6, 12, 17), recast and amplified by the compiler, whose hand is clearly discernible in the phraseology and standpoint of verses 7–16 (the answer of Ahijah). See the notes below; and observe the anachronism in verse 9, 'above all that were before thee.' On the literary coincidences with other prophetic oracles incorporated in the book, cf. Driver, *Introd.*[6], p. 194. On the LXX version of the incident (in xii. 24[a–m]), see Appendix, p. 443 f.

1. At that time: a standing phrase, either of the compiler or of one of his authorities, in introducing a new subject; 2 Kings xvi. 6, xviii. 16, xx. 12, xxiv. 10.

The name **Abijah**, being compounded with Yahweh, proves that Jeroboam was not consciously an apostate from the national religion.

2. which spake concerning me: xi. 29 ff. Verse 4 shows that a considerable time had elapsed since then.

3. For the custom of offering a present to a prophet, cf. 1 Sam. ix. 7 f.; 2 Kings v. 15, viii. 8.

to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child.
And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to 4
Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah
could not see; for his eyes were set by reason of his age.
And the LORD said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of 5
Jeroboam cometh to inquire of thee concerning her son;
for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her:
for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign
herself to be another woman. And it was so, when 6
Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at
the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam;
why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent
to thee with heavy tidings. [D] Go, tell Jeroboam, 7
Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Forasmuch
as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee
prince over my people Israel, and rent the kingdom 8
away from the house of David, and gave it thee: and yet
thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my
commandments, and who followed me with all his heart,

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cracknels: probably small cakes. The LXX (xii. 24^h) adds here the homely touch 'for his children.'

4. his eyes were set: 'fixed'; cf. 1 Sam. iv. 15.

5. For **said** read 'had said.' As in 1 Sam. ix. 15 ff. the prophet had been prepared for the arrival of his visitor by a Divine premonition.

for it shall be. A better construction is supported by the LXX, which at this point resumes the narrative: 'And when she came in, disguising herself, and when Ahijah heard,' &c.

6. why feignest thou. The LXX has a reading more appropriate in the connexion: 'why dost thou bring me bread?'

for I am sent. Render, 'seeing I am sent to thee with hard tidings.'

7–11 are wholly the work of the compiler; the original answer of the prophet is contained in verse 12, which in the LXX (xii. 24^l) follows immediately the question of verse 6.

8. For David as the ideal of piety, see iii. 3, 6, ix. 4, xi. 4, 6, and often.

9 to do that only which was right in mine eyes; but hast
done evil above all that were before thee, and hast gone
and made thee other gods, and molten images, to pro-
voke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back:
10 therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of
Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every man
child, him that is shut up and him that is left at large in
Israel, and will utterly sweep away the house of Jeroboam,
11 as a man sweepeth away dung, till it be all gone. Him
that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat;
and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air
12 eat: for the LORD hath spoken it. [KI] Arise thou
therefore, get thee to thine house: *and* when thy feet
13 enter into the city, the child shall die. [D] And all
Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he only
of Jeroboam shall come to the grave: because in him

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right in mine eyes: as xi. 33, 38, xv. 5, 11, &c.; cf. Deut. xii. 25, xiii. 18, &c.

9. Cf. Deut. iv. 25, ix. 18, xxxi. 29.

all that were before thee: cf. xvi. 25, 30. The stereotyped phrase has little force as applied to Jeroboam, who had no predecessors, and was the originator of the chief sin denounced.

10. every man child: avoiding the coarseness of the original proverbial expression, preserved in the A. V. (cf. xvi. 11, xxi. 21; 2 Kings ix. 8; 1 Sam. xxv. 22, 34).

him that is shut up . . . large: 'the fettered and the free,' an alliterative expression, as xxi. 21; 2 Kings ix. 8, xiv. 26; Deut. xxxii. 36. The primary sense of the categories is obscure. Some take the 'fettered' to be children *in statu pupillari*; others, those who are married; Ewald and W. R. Smith (*Rel. of Sem.*[2], p. 456) consider it to be a ritual term denoting those debarred from religious privileges: on any view the 'free' will include all other males. (A more recent interpretation by Yahuda in *ZA*, 1902, 240 ff.)

11. the dogs: the scavengers of oriental cities: 2 Kings ix. 35 ff.

fowls of the air: carrion-eating birds, like the vulture.

12. More graphically in the LXX (xii. 24[1]): 'Behold thou shalt depart from me, and as thou enterest the gate of Sareira thy maidens shall come out to meet thee, and shall say to thee, The little boy is dead.'

there is found some good thing toward the LORD, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam. Moreover the 14
LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now. For the LORD shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in 15
the water; and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the River; because they have made their Asherim, provoking the LORD to anger. And he shall 16
give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he hath sinned, and wherewith he hath made Israel to sin.
[KI] And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came 17
to Tirzah: *and* as she came to the threshold of the house,

13. some good thing: some promise of early piety. The Rabbis, after their manner, clothe the statement in a legend: Abijah was ordered by his father to keep watch for any who might go up to the feasts to Jerusalem, and he not only did not do this but tore down a barrier which Jeroboam had set up to prevent such pilgrimages! (quoted by Thenius).

14. See xv. 29.

that day: but what? even now. The Hebrew is quite untranslatable. There is also some defect in the beginning of the following verse. Kittel gives a conjectural reconstruction which meets both difficulties: 'in that day. And even then (15) will Yahweh smite Israel, so that it sways as the reed,' &c.; an allusion to the repeated changes of dynasty that marked the history of the northern kingdom down to the Exile, which is foretold in what follows. The grammar is not quite satisfactory; but the sense is certainly attractive.

15. For the threat of exile, see Deut. iv. 26 ff., vi. 15, xxix. 28, &c.

Asherim. See on verse 23.

16. wherewith he hath made Israel to sin: a constantly recurring formula of the compiler: xv. 26, 30, 34, &c.

17. Tirzah was for the next few reigns the residence of the kings of Israel; xv. 21, xvi. 15 ff., &c. The indications seem to point to its being in the neighbourhood of Shechem, but the site is not known. Some have sought it in the ruins of *Tallūza*, a few miles north-east of Nabulus; others at *et-Ṭire* on the west side of Gerizim (Buhl, *Geog.* p. 203).

to the threshold . . . died. LXX (xii. 24[n]) makes the death

18 the child died. [D] And all Israel buried him, and
mourned for him; according to the word of the LORD,
which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the
19 prophet. And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how
he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they are written
in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.
20 And the days which Jeroboam reigned were two and
twenty years: and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab
his son reigned in his stead.

21 And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah.
Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began
to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem,
the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the
tribes of Israel, to put his name there: and his mother's
22 name was Naamah the Ammonitess. And Judah did
that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; and they
provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they
23 committed, above all that their fathers had done. For
they also built them high places, and pillars, and Asherim,

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synchronize with her entrance into the city, adding: 'and the wail came out to meet her.'

xiv. 19, 20. *Concluding Notice on Jeroboam.*

19. how he warred. See verse 30, xv. 7.

the book of the chronicles: see Introd. p. 23.

xiv. 21–31. *Rehoboam of Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xi. 5—xii. 16.)

xiv. 21–24. *Editorial Introduction.*

21. The LXX (B) of xii. 24[a] gives the age of Rehoboam at his accession as sixteen, and the length of his reign as twelve years.

his mother's name. The naming of the queen-mother is a regular feature of the notices of the kings of Judah, due to her dignity and influence at the court (see on ii. 13, and cf. xv. 13).

23. pillars (Heb. *maṣṣēbôth*). The Maṣṣebah was a sacred stone, and seems to have been an indispensable adjunct of the primitive Semitic sanctuary. Originally it was regarded as the abode of the Deity, and at the same time (before the introduction

on every high hill, and under every green tree; and 24
there were also sodomites in the land: they did according
to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD
drave out before the children of Israel. [KJ] And it 25

of fire sacrifices) served the purpose of an altar; afterwards, when a separate altar became necessary, the stone was retained as a symbol of the God (W. R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*², p. 203 ff.). The use of the emblem was tolerated in Israel in early times (Gen. xxviii. 18, 22, xxxi. 13, xxxv. 14, 20, &c.), but prohibited by the later legislation on account of its ineradicable associations with heathenism (Deut. vii. 5, xii. 13; Lev. xxvi. 1, &c.).

Asherim: plur. of *ăsherāh*, which seems to have been a survival of the sacred tree, as the mazzebah was of the sacred stone (for another view see Barton, *Semitic Origins*, pp. 106, 248). It was a wooden pole (Judges vi. 26), the trunk of a tree stripped of its branches (Deut. xvi. 21), erected by the side of the altar (Jer. xvii. 2). It would seem that from very ancient times (Tel-Amarna tablets) the object had been personified, and the word used as the name of a *goddess* (xv. 13, xviii. 19; 2 Kings xxiii. 4, &c.), who is apparently in the O. T. sometimes identified with Ashtoreth (cf. Judges ii. 13 with iii. 7). This marked association of the symbol with a female deity made it at all times repugnant to the true religion of Israel.

on every high hill . . . tree: cf. 2 Kings xvi. 4, xvii. 10; Deut. xii. 2; Jer. ii. 20, iii. 6, xvii. 2.

24. sodomites (Heb. *kādēsh*, holy persons): temple prostitutes, attached to heathen sanctuaries, of Ashtoreth especially, but introduced in Israel into the worship of Yahweh (Deut. xxiii. 17, 18, &c.). The word is here used collectively, including persons of both sexes.

drave out: xxi. 26; 2 Kings xvi. 3, xvii. 8, xxi. 2; Deut. ix. 4, 5, &c.

xiv. 25–28. *The Expedition of Shishak.* The account is taken from the annals of the kingdom of Judah; and the prominence given to the incident is perhaps due less to its political importance than to the fact that it was the first step in the gradual impoverishment of the temple, the successive stages of which are carefully noted throughout the book (see xv. 18; 2 Kings xii. 18, xiv. 14, xvi. 8, 17, xviii. 15 f., xxiv. 13, xxv. 9, 13 ff.). The former friendship between Jeroboam and Shishak naturally suggests that the raid was undertaken for the benefit of Jeroboam, and affected only Judah. It is true that the Egyptian lists in the temple of Amon at Karnak contain the names of more than sixty Ephraimitic cities that paid tribute to Shishak, along with a still greater number of Judaean.

came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that
26 Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: and
he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD,
and the treasures of the king's house; he even took
away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which
27 Solomon had made. And king Rehoboam made in their
stead shields of brass, and committed them to the hands
of the captains of the guard, which kept the door of the
28 king's house. And it was so, that as oft as the king
went into the house of the LORD, the guard bare them,
and brought them back into the guard chamber.
29 [D] Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that

Amongst the former are Taanach, Megiddo, and Shunem on the Plain of Esdraelon, and perhaps Penuel on the east of the Jordan (cf. xii. 25). It is pointed out, however, by Maspero and W. Max Müller that 'it is only the second half of the list which contains details pointing to actual conquest, and these seem to belong to Judah'; the inference being that 'the tribute which the Pharaoh claimed everywhere was promptly given by Jeroboam . . .; in Judah it had to be exacted by force.' It is not improbable that for a time both Judah and Israel became tributary to Egypt. (See further, Driver, *Authority and Archaeology*, p. 87 f.; W. Max Müller, *Asien und Europa*, p. 166; and *EB*, iv. c. 4485 ff.)

25. Shishak. The consonantal text has the form *Shôshak*, in closer correspondence with the Egyptian *Shoshenq*. He was the founder of the twenty-second (Bubastite) dynasty, and is supposed to have reigned *c.* 950 B.C.

26. the treasures of the house of the LORD. See vii. 51.

the shields of gold: x. 17. Instead of these the LXX mentions the shields taken by David from the Syrians, whose removal by Shishak it also notices by anticipation in 2 Sam. viii. 7.

27. the guard: *lit.* 'the runners' (marg.), i.e. footguards. Their duty is to guard the palace and the king's person (i. 5; 2 Kings x. 25, xi. 4, 11, 19).

28. The use of the new shields was no doubt the same as that of those they had replaced, although the former are kept in the **guard chamber** instead of the house of the forest of Lebanon (x. 17).

xv. 29–31. *Concluding Notice*, in which, however, is imbedded a fragment from the annals of the kingdom (verse 30). See on

he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between 30
Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. And Rehoboam 31
slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. And Abijam his son reigned in his stead.

Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son 15
of Nebat began Abijam to reign over Judah. Three 2
years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. And he walked 3
in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father. Nevertheless for 4
David's sake did the LORD his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem: because David did that which was right in the 5

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xii. 21 ff. The mention of the queen-mother is here out of place, and is rightly omitted in 2 Chron. xii. 16, and by the LXX.

xv. 1-8. *Abijam of Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xiii.)

The account of the three years' reign is wholly from the pen of the compiler, verses 1-5 being the introductory formula (slightly expanded), and verses 7, 8 the concluding formula. Verse 6 is an interpolation.

1. Abijam: so always in Kings (xiv. 31), while Chronicles (2 Chron. xiii. 1 ff., &c.) and the LXX give the name as 'Abijah.' The ending *-âm* or *-ôm* is not uncommon in proper names; and it is possible that the two are distinct, the chronicler having inadvertently substituted the more familiar form.

2. Three years: according to the LXX, six years (see on verse 9).

Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. Abishalom is the same as Absalom (2 Chron. xi. 20 ff.), and it is most natural to suppose that the third son of David is meant. A daughter of Absalom must certainly have been older than Rehoboam; and Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 249) makes Maacah the daughter of Tamar (2 Sam. xiv. 27), taking daughter here in the sense of 'granddaughter.'

4. See on xi. 36.

eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, [Z] save
6 only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. Now there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of
7 his life. [D] And the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war
8 between Abijam and Jeroboam. And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.
9 And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel
10 began Asa to reign over Judah. And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mother's name
11 was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. And Asa did

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5. save only in the matter. The eulogy of David is never thus qualified by the compiler; and since the clause is wanting in the LXX, it ought probably to be deleted as the note of an over-scrupulous reader.

6, also omitted by the LXX, is a mistaken repetition of xiv. 30.

7. there was war. The notice would have come properly in the place of verse 6, since as a matter of fact no 'acts' of Abijam have been recorded at all.

xv. 9-24. *Asa of Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xiv—xvi.)

xv. 9-15. *Introductory Formula.* Here the compiler has worked into the 'framework' some fragmentary notices of religious reforms carried out by Asa. Asa is one of the few kings of Judah on whom an entirely favourable judgement is passed.

9. the twentieth year: cf. the statement with verses 1, 2 for an illustration of the chronological method followed by the author of the synchronism (see Introd. p. 40). The LXX puts the accession of Asa in the twenty-fourth year of Jeroboam, showing that its reading in verse 2 was not an accidental error, but a systematic correction; note also its peculiar method of calculating the synchronism.

10. Maacah. See on verse 2. If the statement be strictly accurate in both places, Asa must have been the brother and not the son of Abijam; and so Wellhausen proposes to read in verse 8. But it is perhaps an easier explanation to suppose that Maacah, though not literally the mother of Asa, continued to occupy the

that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father. And he put away the sodomites out of 12
the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. And also Maacah his mother he removed from 13
being queen, because she had made an abominable image for an Asherah; and Asa cut down her image, and burnt it at the brook Kidron. But the high places were not 14
taken away: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect with the LORD all his days. And he brought into the 15
house of the LORD the things that his father had dedicated, and the things that himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels. [KJ] And there was war between 16

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official position of queen-mother after the short reign of her son Abijam.

12. See on xiv. 24.

13. For **queen** read 'queen-mother' (as marg.).

an abominable image. The root of the Hebrew word expresses the idea of horror; but what kind of object is indicated cannot be determined. That it was a mere covering or adornment for the sacred pole (see on xiv. 23) is hardly conceivable. The Vulg. takes it to have been a phallic emblem; and this, though unsupported by the other versions, is perhaps the best conjecture that can be hazarded, so long as we adhere to the common sense of Asherah as the name of the sacred pole. If, however, we take Asherah as a proper name, it is possible to explain the objectionable thing as an image of the goddess so named, or her equivalent Astarte. (See W. R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*[2], p. 456.)

14. The retention of the **high places** (for which the writer blames not the king but the people) was an offence from the standpoint of the Deuteronomic reformation; but was perfectly consistent with the highest standard of religious conduct in the time of Asa. The centralization of the cultus in Jerusalem was a prophetic ideal which had probably not yet dawned on even the most enlightened worshippers of Yahweh.

15. The statement is unintelligible. It looks like a misplaced duplicate of vii. 51[b].

xv. 16-22. *War with Baasha of Israel.* The protracted hostilities between Judah and Israel reach a crisis, in which Asa is driven to seek assistance from the king of Damascus; and thus lead to a second inroad on the temple treasures (cf. xiv. 26). The passage

17 Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. And Baasha
king of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah,
that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa
18 king of Judah. Then Asa took all the silver and the
gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the
LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered
them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent
them to Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimmon, the son of
Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,
19 *There is* a league between me and thee, between my
father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee
a present of silver and gold; go, break thy league with
Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

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may have been transferred intact from the official annals of Judah.

16. Cf. xiv. 30, xv. 7.

17. built (or 'fortified') **Ramah.** The place here meant is the modern *er-Rām*, five miles due north of Jerusalem. Since we find in verse 22 that Asa made no attempt at the end of the war to push the frontier further north, we may assume that at this time Ramah was just on the border of Baasha's kingdom. It was at the same time near enough to Jerusalem to make its permanent occupation by a hostile army a serious menace to the security of the southern kingdom.

18. Cf. the incident, 2 Kings xvi. 7 ff.

all the silver . . . left: cf. xiv. 26.

Ben-hadad. On different forms of the name, see on xx. 1. The grandfather of Ben-hadad must take us back to near the foundation of the Aramaean kingdom, recorded in xi. 24. Hence it was supposed (by Thenius and others) that *Hezîôn* here and *Rezôn* in xi. 23 are the same person, both names being corruptions of an original form *Hezrôn*. Winckler, on the other hand, argues that the correct reading here is Hazael, and that Hezion has arisen from an attempt to combine this with Rezon (*Alttest. Unters.* p. 60 ff.). But neither hypothesis has much plausibility.

19. 'There is': the marg. 'let there be' is manifestly impossible.

a league: 'a covenant.' The kings of Damascus had evidently been playing the usual double game in Palestinian politics, allying themselves now with Judah and now with Israel, according to the passing advantage of the hour.

And Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the 20
captains of his armies against the cities of Israel, and
smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maacah, and all
Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali. And it came 21
to pass, when Baasha heard thereof, that he left off
building of Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah. Then king 22
Asa made a proclamation unto all Judah; none was
exempted: and they carried away the stones of Ramah,
and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded;
and king Asa built therewith Geba of Benjamin, and
Mizpah. [D] Now the rest of all the acts of Asa, and 23
all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which

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20. The district ravaged by the Syrians is in the extreme north of Western Palestine.

Dan, the best-known of the cities, is generally identified with *Tell el-Ḳāḍī*, at the source of the *Leddān*, the middle confluent of the Jordan.

Abel-beth-maacah is recognized in the name *'Abil*, a few miles further west; while **Ijon** is supposed to have been situated further north in the *Merj 'Ayūn*, a narrow plain between the valleys of the Litani and the upper Jordan.

Chinneroth is the old name of the Sea of Galilee (Num. xxxiv. 11, &c.), and also of a town on its western shore (Joshua xix. 35); here **all Chinneroth** seems to denote the fertile plain now called *el-Ghuwēr*.

On **Naphtali**, cf. iv. 15.

21. dwelt in Tirzah: LXX, 'returned to Tirzah.' See on xiv. 17.

22. exempted: the same word as Num. xxxii. 22 (E. V. 'guiltless') and Deut. xxiv. 5 (R. V. 'free'). The places fortified by Asa must be supposed within the territory of Judah.

Geba of Benjamin can hardly be the modern *Jeba*, which is a little further north than Ramah; rather *Tell-el-Fūl* (= Gibeah of Saul, cf. Isa. x. 29), about halfway between Jerusalem and Ramah.

Mizpah is *en-Nebī Samwīl* (the prophet Samuel), a little to the west, the highest point in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

xv. 23, 24. *Concluding Formula* (enclosing another sentence from the annals, referring to a disease of the feet from which the king suffered in his old age).

23. all his might: his heroic achievements. No successes are

he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? But in the time of his old age
24 he was diseased in his feet. And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.
25 And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he
26 reigned over Israel two years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to
27 sin. [KI] And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines;

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attributed to Asa in Kings: but 2 Chron. xiv. 9 ff. narrates a sensational victory over a certain Zerah, king of Ethiopia.

24. Jehoshaphat. See xxii. 41.

xv. 25-32. *Nadab of Israel.*

Having reached the last king of Judah who came to the throne during the life of Jeroboam, the writer now turns to the northern kingdom, and brings its history up to the end of the reign within which the death of Asa fell. Within this period two revolutions took place, each ending in the establishment of a new dynasty. In the reign of Nadab the only event thought worthy of record is the conspiracy of Baasha, which resulted in the extinction of the house of Jeroboam. The narrative is partly in the words of the annalistic document (verses 27–29[a]), partly in those of the compiler himself (29[b], 30). The introductory (verses 25, 26) and concluding (verse 31) formulas are as bare and curt as possible.

25. the second year. Here the mode of reckoning differs from that usually employed by the Hebrew synchronist (see Introd. p. 41), the years of Asa's reign being evidently reckoned from his first *complete* year, which was the twenty-first of Jeroboam: cf. verses 1, 2 and verse 9.

27. Gibbethon appears from Joshua xix. 44, xxi. 23 to have been a frontier town of Dan, held at this time by the Philistines. Since we find it still uncaptured twenty-four years later (xvi. 15), it must have played as great a part in the wars with the Philistines as Ramoth-Gilead afterwards did in those with Damascus. The

for Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon.
Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha 28
slay him, and reigned in his stead. And it came to pass 29
that, as soon as he was king, he smote all the house of
Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed,
until he had destroyed him; [D] according unto the
saying of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of his
servant Ahijah the Shilonite: for the sins of Jeroboam 30
which he sinned, and wherewith he made Israel to sin;
because of his provocation wherewith he provoked the
LORD, the God of Israel, to anger. Now the rest of the 31
acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written
in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?
[Z] And there was war between Asa and Baasha king 32
of Israel all their days.

[D] In the third year of Asa king of Judah began 33
Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tir-

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fact that the rebellion broke out in the camp suggests that Baasha, like Omri, may have been the commander of the army; but this is not directly affirmed.

29, 30. The usurper puts to death the whole family of his predecessor; and in this the compiler recognizes the fulfilment of the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, xiv. 14.

32 repeats verse 16, but is clearly out of place in the account of Nadab's reign, and should probably be omitted, as by the LXX.

xv. 33—xvi. 7. *Baasha of Israel.*

In this section the usual framework is supplemented by an oracle uttered against Baasha and his house by a prophet named Jehu, which obviously could not have found a place in the annals of the kingdom. It occurs, in fact, in two forms: the first (xvi. 1–4) is in the style of the compiler himself; while the second (verse 7) shows no trace of having passed through his hands, and must be regarded as a later addition to the book.

33. the third year. Referring back to verse 25, we see that the two years of Nadab's reign are both fractional parts of a year; his first being that *in* which he became king, and his second that in which he was slain.

began to . . . reign, and reigned: a *zeugma*, the one

34 zah, *and reigned* twenty and four years. And he did that
which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in
the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made
16 Israel to sin. And the word of the LORD came to Jehu
2 the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, Forasmuch
as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince
over my people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way
of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to
3 provoke me to anger with their sins; behold, I will
utterly sweep away Baasha and his house; and I will
make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of
4 Nebat. Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the
dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the field shall the
5 fowls of the air eat. Now the rest of the acts of Baasha,
and what he did, and his might, are they not written in
6 the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And
Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah;

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verb expressing the double sense, 'became king' and 'reigned.' So xvi. 8, 15, 23, 2 Kings xiii. 1, 10, xiv. 23, xv. 8, 17, 23, 27, xvii. 1. The construction, though intelligible, is harsh, and probably arises from the fact that the synchronisms were inserted at a secondary stage of the redaction (Introd. p. 39). Two of them are actually wanting in the LXX (xvi. 8, 15).

xvi. **1. Jehu the son of Hanani** is named by the chronicler as the author of a history which in his time had been incorporated in the book of the kings of Israel (2 Chron. xx. 34). He is also mentioned as meeting Jehoshaphat with a stern rebuke, after the death of Ahab (2 Chron. xix. 2), which is no doubt chronologically possible, though scarcely probable.

2–4. For the phraseology, cf. xiv. 7, 9–11, and other parallels cited by Driver, *Introd.*[6], p. 194.

6. Like Jeroboam, Baasha dies a peaceful death, transmitting the prophetic doom to his son.

buried in Tirzah. See on xiv. 17. Baasha is the first king who is certainly known to have made Tirzah his capital (xv. 21). At the end of the verse the LXX adds, 'in the twentieth (in some MSS., the twenty-eighth) year of king Asa.' It is possible that this is the misplaced synchronism of the accession of Elah, which is wanting in verse 8.

and Elah his son reigned in his stead. [D²] And moreover by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and because he smote him. 7

[D] In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, *and reigned* two years. [KI] And his servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him: now he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, which was over the household in Tirzah: and Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and 8 9 10

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7. The position of the verse, *after* the concluding formula, would of itself create doubts of its genuineness. It is clearly a parallel to verses 1–4; and the only motive that can be assigned for its insertion is in the last clause: the interpolator wished to make it clear that the doom of Baasha's house was due not merely to his following in the footsteps of Jeroboam, but also to his ruthless cruelty to the offspring of his predecessor (cf. the similar judgement on the house of Jehu, in Hos. i. 4).

xvi. 8–14. *Elah of Israel.*

The introduction (verse 8) is abbreviated by the omission of the religious judgement; and in the LXX by the omission of the synchronism (but see on verse 6 above). In the narrative of Zimri's conspiracy, verses 9–11 are from the chronicles of the kingdom, while verses 12, 13 are an editorial supplement. Verse 14 is the usual concluding formula.

9. he was in Tirzah. While the army was in the field against the Philistines, the king was giving himself up to dissipation in the capital.

Arza, the major-domo, was probably an accomplice of the arch-conspirator Zimri, who held an important, though subordinate, military command.

10. in the twenty and seventh year . . . Judah: omitted by the LXX, but undoubtedly genuine (see xv. 28).

11. Cf. xv. 29.

11 reigned in his stead. And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he smote all the house of Baasha: he left him not a single man child, neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends.
12 [D] Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake against
13 Baasha by Jehu the prophet, for all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, which they sinned, and wherewith they made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD,
14 the God of Israel, to anger with their vanities. Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?
15 In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah. [KI] Now the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged

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man child: see xiv. 10.

his kinsfolks: *lit.* 'his redeemers,' i. e. those near enough of kin to fall under the various obligations of the *gô'ēl* (see Ruth ii. 20, iii. 13, iv. 4 ff).

12, 13 are the reflection of the compiler on the incident.

their vanities: a common designation of false gods: Deut. xxxii. 21; Jer. viii. 19, xiv. 22, &c.

xvi. 15–20. *Zimri of Israel.*

The usurper did not in this case reap the fruit of his crime. On hearing of the event the army at Gibbethon immediately elected their general Omri as king and marched against Tirzah. Zimri in despair set fire to the palace and perished in the flames. The narrative part of the section (verses 15[b]–18) is the continuation of verses 9–11 in the primary document; the compiler has supplied verse 19, besides the introduction (verse 15[a]) and the conclusion (20).

15[a]. The synchronism is omitted by LXX (B); the Lucianic text has 'In the twenty-second year of Asa,' &c. LXX (B) is again peculiar in assigning to Zimri a reign of seven years, instead of seven days.

15[b]. the people: i. e. the army, as often (2 Sam. i. 4, &c., &c.).

Gibbethon: see on xv. 27.

to the Philistines. And the people that were encamped 16
heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also smitten
the king: wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of
the host, king over Israel that day in the camp. And 17
Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him,
and they besieged Tirzah. And it came to pass, when 18
Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the
castle of the king's house, and burnt the king's house
over him with fire, and died, [D] for his sins which he 19
sinned in doing that which was evil in the sight of the
LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin
which he did, to make Israel to sin. Now the rest of 20
the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, are
they not written in the book of the chronicles of the
kings of Israel?

[KI] Then were the people of Israel divided into two 21
parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath,

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16. In those troublous and anarchic times, election by the elders or the assembly (xii. 20) naturally gave place to election by the army, when the ablest general had the best chance. In this case it resulted in the founding of the strongest dynasty the northern kingdom ever had: see below.

18. the castle of the king's house: 'the citadel of the royal palace.' The word for **castle** is usually rendered 'palace'; here it can only mean the best defended of a complex of royal buildings.

19. for his sins. The judgement is surprising in the case of one who reigned only seven days, who certainly had crimes enough to answer for, but could hardly have been the means of causing Israel to sin after the fashion of Jeroboam.

20. and his treason. It is difficult to see on what grounds Benzinger and many others assert that such statements could not have stood in the official annals. See Introd. p. 24.

xvi. 21, 22. *Rival Claimants for the Crown.* After the death of Zimri his faction appears to have found a new leader in a certain Tibni, the son of Ginath, who must have kept the allegiance of a section of the people for a considerable time (see on verse 23). The verses are taken from the same source as verses 16–18, and are untouched by the compiler.

22 to make him king; and half followed Omri. But the
people that followed Omri prevailed against the people
that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died,
23 and Omri reigned. [D] In the thirty and first year of
Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, *and*
reigned twelve years: [KI] six years reigned he in Tirzah.
24 And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents

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22. so Tibni died. The LXX has: 'And Tibni and Joram his brother died at that time, and Omri reigned instead of Tibni.' The additions (which can scarcely be mere inventions) show that Tibni's resistance was of a much more formidable character than we should gather from the Hebrew.

xvi. 23–28. *Omri of Israel.*

With the exception of verse 24 (which is an ancient notice thrust into the introduction) the whole passage is written by the compiler, who tells little beyond the fact that Omri reigned wickedly for twelve years. It is a meagre record of an eventful and powerful reign. To the Assyrians Omri was known as the founder of the kingdom of Israel; and for all effective purposes he is fairly entitled to that distinction. In the Inscriptions, Jehu, the destroyer of his dynasty, is called by Shalmaneser II 'the son of Humri'; and down to the time of Sargon the country is described as 'the land of the house of Humri.' From another quarter, the Stone of Mesha testifies to his prowess as the subjugator of the land of Moab, which remained under the dominion of Israel for forty years. His choice of Samaria as the capital, which is the one thing here related to his credit, was itself an evidence of political sagacity, comparable to David's selection of Jerusalem. The compiler's silence with regard to the more brilliant aspects of the reign is an evidence of his indifference to purely secular interests.

23. In the thirty and first year. This allows an interregnum of four years between the election of Omri (verse 16) and his acknowledgement as undisputed sovereign. The twelve years of his reign, however, are reckoned from the death of Elah (see verse 29), a clear indication that the synchronistic notice has been superimposed on the original introduction. That, at least, is the view that has prevailed in the Hebrew text; on the divergent scheme of the LXX, see on verse 29.

24. The site of the ancient Samaria is now occupied by the village of *Sebustiyeh*, six miles north-west of Nabulus. It stood on the crest of an isolated conical hill, rising more than 300 feet

of silver; and he built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill, Samaria. [D] And Omri did that 25
which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and dealt wickedly above all that were before him. For he walked 26
in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sins wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger with their vanities. Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his 27
might that he shewed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Omri slept 28
with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.

And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah 29

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above the level of the broad valley from which it springs (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.* p. 346). Its strikingly beautiful situation suggested to Isaiah the image of a wreath on the brow of a drunken reveller (Isa. xxviii. 1).

Samaria, the Greek form of the name, is akin to the Assyrian *Samirina* and Aramaic *Shāmerain*, and probably more ancient than the Hebrew *Shōmerôn*: it is certainly more easily derivable from **Shemer**, the name of the owner of the hill.

25. above all that were before him. Wherein his exceptional wickedness consisted is not told either in verse 26 or anywhere else. Mic. vi. 16 ('statutes of Omri') might show that some religious innovations of a reprehensible kind were attributed to him in later times.

[After verse 28 the LXX inserts the account of Jehoshaphat's reign; see on verse 29.]

xvi. 29–34. *Ahab of Israel. Introduction.*

These verses are the editorial introduction (interspersed with a few annalistic notices) to the reign of Ahab. It is separated from the concluding notice in xxii. 39, 40 by a series of narratives of the highest historical and religious interest. The most important fact of the reign was the introduction of the Phoenician Baal-worship, which is here described as a consequence of the marriage alliance with the king of Tyre, and rightly characterized as a menace to the national religion which threw the cult of Jeroboam's golden calves completely into the shade. The re-

began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and
Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria
30 twenty and two years. And Ahab the son of Omri did
that which was evil in the sight of the LORD above all
31 that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had
been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jero-
boam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the
daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and
32 served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up

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building of Jericho (verse 34) is presumably recorded as a glaring illustration of the impiety and indifference to spiritual considerations that marked the age.

29. in the thirty and eighth year: LXX, 'in the second year of Jehoshaphat.' We have here a good example of the freedom with which the text was handled in early times, and also a proof of the secondary character of the whole synchronistic scheme. The explanation of the difference is probably as follows. The LXX reckons the twelve years of Omri from the suppression of Tibni (verse 23), which brings the end of the reign down to the forty-third of Asa. Since Asa reigned only forty-one years, the death of Omri thus falls in the reign of Jehoshaphat. Then the plan of the book required that the account of Jehoshaphat should come between Omri and Ahab; and accordingly the LXX actually inserts it between verses 28 and 29 (28^{a-h}, in Swete), dating his accession in the eleventh year of Omri. Otherwise, the verse is given by the LXX in a simpler and probably more original form than in the Hebrew.

31. And it came . . . walk: better, perhaps, 'And it was the lightest (of his offences) that he walked,' &c.

Ethbaal: Ithobal I ('with him is Baal') of Tyre is mentioned by Menander (Josephus, *Ant.* viii. 131 f.); his reign is dated by Winckler 887–876 B.C. (*KAT*^{3}, p. 129). The name **Jezebel** (*'Izebel*) is of uncertain etymology. The marriage, which proved so disastrous to Ahab's dynasty and the peace of the nation, was in itself a clever stroke of statecraft. Ahab, like Solomon before him, perceived the advantage of an alliance with Tyre; and he secured it in the usual way by taking the Tyrian princess as his consort. The inevitable practical corollary was the recognition of the foreign deity, out of which arose the great religious struggle of the reign.

32, 33. International courtesy demanded that the foreign queen should have a sanctuary of her own religion in her adopted

an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made the Asherah; and 33
Ahab did yet more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him. [KI] In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite 34
build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof with the loss of Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof with the loss of his youngest son Segub; according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of Joshua the son of Nun.

[Ej] And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the sojourners 17

country; and accordingly Ahab, still following in the footsteps of Solomon (xi. 7), erects in Samaria a temple to Baal, with its indispensable adjuncts, the asherah and (as we learn from 2 Kings iii. 2) the maṣṣebah (see on xiv. 23).

Baal is here evidently the Baal or chief god of Tyre, Melḳarth. On the religious significance of the innovation, see the introductory note to next chapter.

34 is wanting in LXX (L), and presents some difficulties.

Jericho: now *Erîḥa*, not far from the mouth of the Jordan; but the O. T. city is thought to have been at *'Ain es-Sulṭân*, about one and a half miles to the north-west, and six miles from the river. The place had not lain waste since its destruction by Joshua (see 2 Sam. x. 5, Judges iii. 13); hence the word **build** must be understood in the frequent sense of 'extend' or 'fortify': how this task fell to a private individual does not appear. The expression **with the loss of** (*lit.* 'at the cost of'—the so-called *Bêth pretii*) is variously interpreted. Some think of an immolation of the two sons by the father, in order to extinguish the curse that lay on the rebuilding of the city; others (as Winckler) of the primitive custom of burying human victims alive under foundations or thresholds, to avert the wrath of the earth-demons (cf. Trumbull, *Threshold Covenant*, p. 46 ff.). These theories are perhaps uncalled for; the best explanation may, after all, be that some tragic fate actually overtook Hiel's sons, and that the common opinion recognized in this the operation of the ancient curse pronounced by Joshua (Joshua vi. 26).

xvii–xix. *Elijah and Ahab.*

Although these chapters cover only about three years of Elijah's life they present an epitome of his whole career, and constitute

of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD, the God of Israel,

the chief document for our interpretation of the religious crisis of the ninth century. The nature of that crisis must be briefly indicated. The worship of the Baals—the local deities of the old Canaanitish sanctuaries—had been practised by the Israelites ever since the Conquest, and had resulted in an amalgamation of the two types of religion, and a confusion of the ethical character of Yahweh with the attributes proper to a mere nature-deity. It is probable that by the time of Elijah this process had gone so far as no longer to excite any effectual protest on behalf of the purity of the national faith. But the introduction of the cult of the Tyrian Baal under the patronage of Jezebel was recognized as a new departure in the life of the people, and it raised anew the whole issue between true and false religion in Israel. At this juncture Elijah appeared. He saw, if no one else did, that the conflict between Yahweh and Baal was no mere affair of politics or patriotism, but a conflict between two opposite religious principles, of which one could not exist alongside of the other; on the one hand the immoral nature-religion of Canaan, and on the other the ethical religion of Israel. 'To him,' as Wellhausen has finely said, 'Baal and Yahweh represented, so to speak, a contrast of principles, of profound and ultimate practical convictions; both could not be right, nor could they exist side by side. For him there existed no plurality of Divine Powers, operating with equal authority in different spheres, but everywhere One Holy and Mighty Being, who revealed Himself, not in the life of nature, but in those laws by which alone human society is held together, in the ethical demands of the spirit.' (*Israelitische und Jüdische Geschichte*[3], p. 74.) The perception of that fundamental antagonism, and the rigorous enforcement of its practical consequences, are the key to the significance of Elijah's ministry. As the precursor of the prophetic movement of the following century, he is to be ranked as the greatest religious personality that had been raised up in Israel since Moses.

Critics are unanimous in assigning the narrative to a Biography of Elijah, written from the prophetic point of view, and distinct from all the other documents incorporated in the book (see Introd. p. 28). On two points some difference of opinion exists: (*a*) as to whether ch. xxi belongs to the same source as xvii–xix (on this something will be said in the introduction to ch. xxi); and (*b*) as to the date of the composition. It is noteworthy that the section (in contrast to ch. xxi) shows no decided trace of Deuteronomic revision; hence, so far as literary evidence goes, the possibility is left open that it might have been embodied in the history after the compilation of Kings. And there are perhaps some features which by themselves might suggest a late

liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. And the 2

composition. But there are other and more essential characteristics which can only be explained on the assumption of a relatively early date (the beginning of the eighth century). Thus (1) the absence of any polemic against the worship of the golden calves is in marked contrast to the compiler's persistent criticism of that offence, and makes it probable that the narrative is older than Amos and Hosea; (2) the complaint of the destruction of the northern altars (xix. 14) could hardly have been recorded by any writer influenced by the Deuteronomic legislation; and (3) the manner in which the judgement on Israel is represented (see the note on xix. 17) could not possibly originate after the historical tradition had once been fixed by the Book of Kings. It seems a reasonable conclusion that while the history may be idealized in a way that precludes the assumption of strictly contemporary authorship, yet the biography must have taken shape in an age to which the work of Elijah was a living memory.

xvii. 1. *Elijah's Message to Ahab.* With the eagle-like suddenness which characterizes all his movements Elijah appears abruptly before Ahab with the announcement of a drought which is to continue for some years, and not to be removed except in accordance with his prophetic word. The threat raises in the most effective way the religious question which Elijah wished to force on the minds of his contemporaries: Who is the truly Divine Being—Yahweh or Baal? In nothing did the ancient world recognize the hand of God more directly than in the giving and withholding of rain; and the chief purpose of this prediction is to demonstrate that the God whose servant Elijah is is the sole ruler of nature, against whose will no power in heaven or earth can prevail. It is generally supposed that the beginning of the history has been omitted in the compilation; but the considerations that point in that direction have no great weight; and it is doubtful if any introduction would not weaken the dramatic effect of the great prophet's advent on the scene.

1. of the sojourners of Gilead. There is little doubt that the correct reading is that of the LXX: 'from Tishbe of Gilead'—so defined to distinguish it from another Tishbe in Galilee (Tobit i. 2). A place *Istib*, a few miles north-west from *Mahne* (see on iv. 14), where a ruined shrine still bears the name *Mār Elyās*, has been plausibly identified with the birthplace of Elijah.

before whom I stand: expresses the prophet's lofty consciousness of his personal relation to Yahweh (cf. xviii. 15).

xvii. 2-7. *Elijah at the Brook Cherith.* The intensity of the calamity is delineated, not in vague general statements, but

3 word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Get thee hence,
and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook
4 Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that
thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded
5 the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did
according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and
6 dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And
the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning,
and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the
7 brook. And it came to pass after a while, that the brook
dried up, because there was no rain in the land.
8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,
9 Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon,

concretely and vividly through the experiences of the prophet himself. He is sent first to a desolate wadi east of the Jordan, where, fed morning and evening by the ravens, he watches the gradual dwindling of the stream from which he drank.

3. Get thee hence. The want of any previous determination of locality is one of the reasons assigned for thinking the narrative has been curtailed at the beginning.

the brook Cherith (*Krith*) is traditionally associated with the *Wadi el-Kelt* in the neighbourhood of Jericho. But the word **before** in a geographical designation can hardly be understood otherwise than as 'eastward,' so that the place must be sought in one of the watercourses flowing into the Jordan from the east, where in fact it is put by the *Onomasticon* of Eusebius (Lagarde's edition, pp. 113, 302).

6. the ravens. The attempt to minimize the miracle by reading 'the Arabs' (*'ărābîm* for *'ōrĕbîm*) is a rationalistic absurdity. For **bread and flesh** the LXX reads 'bread in the morning and flesh in the evening,' which looks better, but may have been suggested by Exod. xvi. 8.

xvii. 8-16. *Elijah with the Widow of Zarephath.* The prophet is next sent to Zarephath in Phoenicia, where he lodges in the house of a widow, sustained by the miraculous barrel of meal and cruse of oil, which failed not while the famine lasted. It is impossible to conceive a more terribly realistic picture of mute abject human suffering than the account of Elijah's first interview with the woman at the gate.

9. Zarephath (Sarepta, Luke iv. 26), on the sea-coast, nine or ten miles south of Sidon, near the modern village of *Ṣarafend.*

and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow
woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went to 10
Zarephath; and when he came to the gate of the city,
behold, a widow woman was there gathering sticks: and
he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little
water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was 11
going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me,
I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she 12
said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but
an handful of meal in the barrel, and a little oil in the
cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that
I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we
may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear 13
not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof
a little cake first, and bring it forth unto me, and after-
ward make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the 14
LORD, the God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not
waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day
that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth. And she 15
went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she,
and he, and her house, did eat *many* days. The barrel 16
of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail,
according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by

10, 11. The woman complies readily with the request for water, but when asked for bread is forced to declare the absolute destitution to which she is reduced.

12. the LORD thy God. The woman is a heathen, but recognizes Elijah as a worshipper of Yahweh, and swears by his God. For **son** the LXX, here and in verse 13, reads 'sons.'

13. make me . . . first: a severe trial of her faith.

15. The woman trusts the prophet, and is rewarded by the fulfilment of his promise.

For **her house** read 'her son' (LXX 'sons,' as before).

many **days:** strictly, 'for some time.' The word is not found in the LXX, and is apparently interpolated.

17 Elijah. And it came to pass after these things, that the
son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick;
and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath
18 left in him. And she said unto Elijah, What have I to
do with thee, O thou man of God? thou art come unto
me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to slay my
19 son! And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he
took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into the
chamber, where he abode, and laid him upon his own
20 bed. And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD
my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow
21 with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And he
stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried
unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee,
22 let this child's soul come into him again. And the

xvii. 17–24. *The Widow's Son restored to Life.* After some time the widow's son falls sick and dies, but through the intercession of Elijah is restored to life. The mother makes avowal of her faith in the God of Elijah.

17. no breath left in him: no sign of life. Though the writer seems to avoid the direct assertion that the child died, Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 325) is mistaken in suggesting that he describes the case as one of apparent death merely. Such a view is not consistent with the language of verse 21.

18. to bring my sin to remembrance. The idea seems to be that the presence of the man of God has called the attention of the Deity to guilt which would otherwise have been overlooked, and of which she herself had been unconscious. As in the O. T. generally, the sense of sin is awakened by calamity, and the mind is carried back behind conscious transgressions to the deep-seated moral defect which is inherent in human nature.

19. the chamber: 'the upper chamber' (see 2 Kings iv. 10), not usually found in the houses of the poor.

20. hast thou also brought: or rather, with a change of emphasis, 'hast thou brought evil upon the very widow with whom . . .?' i. e. in addition to the universal misery caused by the drought.

21. stretched himself upon: cf. 2 Kings iv. 34 f. and Acts xx. 10. The LXX reads 'breathed into the child.'

let this child's soul. The soul (*nephesh*) is the principle of

LORD hearkened unto the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And 23
Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. And the 24
woman said to Elijah, Now I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth.

And it came to pass after many days, that the word of 18
the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. 2
And the famine was sore in Samaria. And Ahab called 3
Obadiah, which was over the household. (Now Obadiah

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life, and cannot be conceived as having left the body except at death (contrast x. 5). Whether it was believed to survive the death of the body as an independent entity is a disputed point of O. T. psychology.

24. Now I know: by experience; not that she had doubted it before (verse 18).

that the word . . . truth: or, 'that the word of Yahweh is truly in thy mouth.' (Ps. cxxxii. 11.)

xviii. 1–19. *Elijah's Meeting with Ahab.* In the third year (of the drought) Elijah is commanded to emerge from his seclusion and bring the controversy between Yahweh and Israel to a decision. He first appears to Obadiah, the God-fearing minister of the palace, who has just parted from Ahab to search the country for pasture to the royal riding-beasts; and Obadiah, after being reassured as to Elijah's intention, goes to seek his master. Ahab soon appears—the LXX says he 'ran out' in his eagerness to confront the 'troubler of Israel'—but he is overawed by the stern dignity of the prophet's answer, who rolls back the blame of Israel's troubles on the idolatries of the ruling house. Elijah demands a convocation of all Israel, with the representatives of the foreign religion, at Carmel; and the king complies.

3b, 4 interrupt the narrative by the recital of an episode in which Obadiah had given proof of his fidelity to the cause of Yahweh. It is generally supposed that this is a condensation of a fuller report of Jezebel's persecution, which stood originally

4 feared the LORD greatly: for it was so, when Jezebel cut
off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hun-
dred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed
5 them with bread and water.) And Ahab said unto Oba-
diah, Go through the land, unto all the fountains of
water, and unto all the brooks: peradventure we may
find grass and save the horses and mules alive, that we
6 lose not all the beasts. So they divided the land between
them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by him-
7 self, and Obadiah went another way by himself. And
as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and
he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Is it thou,
8 my lord Elijah? And he answered him, It is I: go, tell
9 thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. And he said, Wherein
have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into
10 the hand of Ahab, to slay me? As the LORD thy God
liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord

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in an earlier part of the document. That is possible; but what is here given is taken directly from verse 13, and a fuller account was perhaps unnecessary in a biography of Elijah.

4. The activity of the prophetic schools (see on xx. 35) was a marked feature of the time, and a symptom of the rising opposition to Jezebel's influence. Of her persecution of the prophets we know nothing; but we cannot suppose that it was part of an organized scheme to suppress the worship of Yahweh in favour of that of Baal (see ch. xxii.).

5. Go through: better, as LXX, 'Come and let us go through.'

that we lose not: read with LXX (L), 'that cattle be not cut off from us.'

7. The appearance of Elijah is unexpected and mysterious, as in xvii. 1, xxi. 20.

9. Obadiah fears that the prophet may vanish as suddenly as he came, leaving him to bear the brunt of Ahab's exasperation.

10. the LORD thy God: cf. xvii. 12. The expression in the mouth of an Israelite is a recognition of the special relation of the prophet to God; so Isa. vii. 13. There is an obvious but not unnatural exaggeration in the description of Ahab's efforts to discover Elijah.

hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not here, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go, 11
tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. And it shall come 12
to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth. Was it not told my lord what I did when 13
Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? And now thou 14
sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*: and he shall slay me. And Elijah said, As the LORD of hosts 15
liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to-day. So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and 16
told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah. And it came 17
to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him,

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12. Obadiah shares the popular belief that the prophet's mysterious movements are caused by the supernatural power of the spirit of Yahweh (cf. 2 Kings ii. 16); but there seems no trace of this idea in the mind of the writer. The conception appears in Ezekiel (iii. 12, viii. 3, xliii. 5), but it is of course not to be inferred that it originated with him.

13. See above on verse 4.

15. the LORD of hosts: Heb. *Yahweh Ẓĕbā'ôth*—a peculiarly solemn title of the God of Israel, designating Him usually as the Lord of the universe, or its cosmical forces. It is held by some scholars (Wellhausen, Smend, &c.) that it was first introduced into the language of religion by the prophet Amos, and that all occurrences of it in the older history are due to literary revision. Another and more probable view is that it originated in the period of the Philistine wars, as a name of the battle-God of the Hebrew hosts (1 Sam xvii. 45). That it acquired a larger, and in some sense an opposite, connotation in the hands of the prophets is undoubtedly true; but Elijah is in many respects the forerunner of the literary prophets, and it is not incredible that in its more exalted acceptation it was first used by him.

18 Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel? And he answered,
I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's
house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of
19 the LORD, and thou hast followed the Baalim. Now
therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount
Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty,
and the prophets of the Asherah four hundred, which eat
20 at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent unto all the children of
Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount

17, 18. troubler . . . troubled: a strong word, meaning 'to bring disaster upon' (Gen. xxxiv. 30; Joshua vi. 18, vii. 25).

the Baalim: 'the Baals'—referring to the local forms under which the Canaanitish Baal was worshipped.

19. Carmel: see below on verse 20.

and the prophets of the Asherah four hundred. If the words be genuine Asherah must here be the proper name of a goddess (see on xiv. 23). But since these prophets are not mentioned in verses 22 and 40 it is not unlikely that the clause is a late gloss, which the LXX has repeated in verse 22, though not in verse 40.

eat at Jezebel's table: see on ii. 7.

That the Phoenician and Canaanite religion had its prophets (*nĕbî'im*) is an important historical notice, whose interest is enhanced by the description of their frenzied demeanour in verse 28.

xviii. 20-40. *The Sacrifice on Carmel.* The scene chosen for this great vindication of the divinity of Yahweh is Mount Carmel, 'sacred above all mountains, and forbidden of access to the vulgar.' There is some reason to believe that the mountain was held sacred by the Phoenicians, and had an altar to Baal as well as one to Yahweh (verse 30). (For the classical testimonies, see W. R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*[2], p. 156.) Hence it was the fittest place imaginable for a contest such as Elijah contemplated, between the rival claims to divinity of Yahweh and Baal. The incident is described with all the impressiveness and circumstance which befitted the crowning act of Elijah's prophetic career. The issue of the trial by fire demonstrated, as completely as physical miracle could ever do, the impotence and non-entity of Baal and the presence of true godhead behind the word of Elijah. The assembled people were for the moment overawed and convinced; and the extermination of the Baal-prophets seemed to seal for ever the victory of the true religion over the false.

20. unto mount Carmel. The precise spot on the long range

Carmel. And Elijah came near unto all the people, and 21
said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the
LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.
And the people answered him not a word. Then said 22
Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, am left a prophet
of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and
fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; 23
and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut
it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire un-
der: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on the
wood, and put no fire under. And call ye on the name 24
of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD:
and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God.
And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.
And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you 25
one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are
many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire
under. And they took the bullock which was given 26

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of Carmel where the sacrifices took place cannot, of course, be determined with certainty; but none can be found more suitable than *el-Muḥrāḳā* (the place of burning), at the foot of which is *Tell el-Ḳasīs* (the priests' mound), the place traditionally associated with the massacre of the prophets of Baal. *El-Muḥrāḳā* stands nearly 1,600 feet above sea-level, nearly four miles south of the highest summit; it has no view of the sea, which, however, can readily be obtained by a few minutes' ascent (see verse 43). Hard by is a spring, from which the water might have been drawn for the drenching of the altar (33 ff.).

21. halt ye between two opinions: LXX, 'go lame on both knee joints.' The literal sense of the Hebrew is obscure, but the idea of the question is clear from what immediately follows. It satirizes the attempt to combine two religions so incongruous as those of Baal and Yahweh.

22. I, even I only, am left: cf. xix. 14; but see, on the other hand, verse 13, xx. 13, xxii. 6 ff.

24. the God that answereth by fire: cf. 2 Chron. vii. 1.

26. The words **which was given them** (strictly, 'which he

them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered.
27 And they leaped about the altar which was made. And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is musing, or he is gone aside, or he is in a journey, or peradventure
28 he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and
29 lances, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it was so, when midday was past, that they prophesied until

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had given them') are to be omitted, with the LXX, as inconsistent with verses 23, 25.

leaped is the same word as is rendered 'halt' in verse 21. It seems to denote a religious dance round the altar, accompanied with contortions of the body, as was usual in such ceremonies.

which was made: LXX, 'which they had made.'

27. It is unreasonable to doubt that Elijah's irony is conceived in the spirit of absolute monotheism, as distinguished from mere monolatry. He could not have used such language if the question in his mind had been merely whether Baal was the proper god for Israel to worship: he plainly implies that Baal is no god at all.

he is musing: LXX, 'is engaged in conversation.'

gone aside is explained as a euphemistic expression. The sentence as a whole is awkward in style.

28. The taunt of Elijah stimulates the devotees of Baal to still higher frenzy. The cutting of the flesh, so that the blood gushes out on the altar, is an instance of a widely diffused piece of primitive ritual, based originally, as W. R. Smith has argued, on the idea of a blood-bond thus established between the god and the worshipper (loc. cit. p. 321 ff.). Here it is perhaps sufficiently explained as a substitute for human sacrifice, or an attempt to excite the pity of the god.

29. they prophesied: i. e. they had worked themselves up to the condition of wild convulsive frenzy in which they were no longer capable of self-control, but were supposed to be taken possession of by a supernatural power. Such manifestations were characteristic of the earlier and lower forms of prophecy even in Israel (1 Sam. x. 10, xix. 20-24), and were always associated with the name *nābî'* (prophet), so that in popular speech 'prophet' and 'madman' were almost convertible terms (1 Sam. xviii. 10; 2 Kings

the time of the offering of the *evening* oblation; but there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come 30
near unto me; and all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was thrown down. [P] And Elijah took twelve stones, according to 31
the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name. And with the stones he built an altar in the 32
name of the LORD; [Ej] and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in 33
pieces, and laid it on the wood. And he said, Fill four

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ix. 11; Jer. xxix. 26). This exhibition lasted till **the time of the offering of the** evening **oblation,** which must therefore have been an established custom in the northern sanctuaries, and must evidently have been observed long before nightfall. Whether this time corresponded with that prescribed by the Priestly Code ('between the two evenings,' Exod. xxix. 39 R. V. marg.) is uncertain. Between verses 29 and 30 the LXX has another address of Elijah to the prophets of Baal, which is possibly genuine: 'Cease forthwith, and I will offer my burnt-offering. And they ceased and withdrew.'

30. And he repaired . . . thrown down: clearly showing that a local sanctuary of Yahweh had stood on the spot. The statement appears inconsistent with what immediately follows; for if the old altar was repaired, there was no need to build a new one. Hence those critics are probably right who consider verses 31, 32^a to be an interpolation by a reader who took exception to the idea of Elijah tacitly sanctioning the use of a provincial altar by restoring it so reverently; and who reveals his standpoint by a direct quotation from the Priestly Code (Gen. xxxv. 10). This view is confirmed by the fact that in the LXX verses 31, 32^a stand *before* the last sentence of verse 30.

32^b. as great as would contain: rather, 'about as much as would be sown with two seahs.' The *seah* is a third of an ephah (see on v. 11). In the Mishnah the expression here used (*bêth seāh*) is said to be a definite area, about 900 sq. yards (Benzinger); twice that would be the size of Elijah's 'trench.' The measurement may apply to the area enclosed by the trench.

33-35. Such elaborate precautions against the suspicion of fraud

barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt offering, and
34 on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time; and
they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the
35 third time; and they did it the third time. And the
water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench
36 also with water. And it came to pass at the time of the
offering of the *evening* oblation, that Elijah the prophet
came near, and said, O LORD, the God of Abraham, of
Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art
God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have
37 done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD,
hear me, that this people may know that thou, LORD, art
God, and *that* thou hast turned their heart back again.
38 Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt
offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and
39 licked up the water that was in the trench. And when
all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they
40 said, The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God. And
Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let
not one of them escape. And they took them: and

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read very strangely in the O. T. To the mind of one commentator they have actually suggested the grotesque idea that naphtha was used!

36, 37. The prayer of Elijah contains two petitions: first, for the vindication of his own prophetic authority, a final proof that he had all along acted in accordance with the will of God; and second, for the bringing back of the nation to faith in the one true God. On the answer he feels that he has staked the whole future of Israel's religion. That 36[b] and 37 are duplicates (Benzinger) is not probable.

38. The Divine answer takes of necessity the form of a miracle, an event which cannot be explained by any known laws of nature. And without assuming the reality of this miracle it would be difficult to avoid dissolving the whole history of Elijah into legend.

the fire of the LORD is the lightning (Gen. xix. 24, &c.).

40. The slaughter of the false prophets took place, not on the scene of the sacrifice, but at the **brook Kishon** (*Nahr el-Muḳaṭṭa*), at the foot of the hill (see on verse 20).

Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there. And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, 41
eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah 42
went up to the top of Carmel; and he bowed himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees. And he said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the 43
sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it 44
came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a cloud out of the sea, as small as a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Make ready

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xviii. 41–46. *The coming of the Rain.* Having, as it seemed, made an end for ever of idolatry in Israel, Elijah now turns to Ahab with an assurance that the sorely-needed rain will be no longer withheld. While the king eats and drinks in his tent, the prophet ascends the mountain to wait and pray for the first sign of the promised blessing. At last his attendant reports a speck of cloud on the horizon, and speedily the whole sky is overcast, and before Ahab's chariot can reach the gate of Jezreel the rain has begun to fall.

41. Get thee up: from the banks of the river, where he had witnessed the massacre of his queen's satellites, to some point not indicated on the mountain-side. It is impossible to form a distinct picture of the situation.

there is the sound. The prophet means that he already hears (in spirit) the noise of the coming rain.

42. he bowed himself down. The verb occurs again only in 2 Kings iv. 34 f. Neither the attitude itself nor its significance can be fully explained. It seems, however, to express intense concentration of thought on an invisible object, since Elijah cannot relax his attention to observe the signs of the weather, but sends his servant to look.

43. Go again seven times: add with the LXX, 'And the servant went again seven times.' (See further, Burney's *Notes*, p. 228.)

44, 45. With the appearing of the cloud, **as small as a man's hand**, Elijah knows that his prayer is answered, and he has hardly time to send warning to Ahab before the heaven is black with storm-clouds, and a rain that must speedily make the roads impassable has begun to fall.

thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee
45 not. And it came to pass in a little while, that the
heaven grew black with clouds and wind, and there was
a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel.
46 And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he
girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance
of Jezreel.

19 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and
withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.
2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So
let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy

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46. From the nearest end of Carmel to Jezreel (*Zer'in*) would be a ride of seventeen or eighteen miles. The object of Elijah's great feat is not stated, and conjecture is useless. It is not even said that he made himself a runner to Ahab's chariot, but only that he reached Jezreel before it. The incident is recorded chiefly as a proof of the supernatural power by which the prophet was sustained.

xix. 1–9a. *Elijah's Flight and Despair.* Threatened with the vengeance of Jezebel, Elijah flees first to Beer-sheba in the extreme south of Judah; and then goes a day's journey into the wilderness, where, in utter prostration of body and spirit, he throws himself down under a shrub and prays for death. He is twice wakened from sleep by an angel, and finds food and drink miraculously provided for him; thus refreshed and strengthened he proceeds on his long pilgrimage to Horeb, the mount of God. Although many features of the narrative are obscure, its main conceptions convey an irresistible impression of truth. The psychological reaction following on the disappointment of his grand ambition, his temporary loss of faith in his own mission, his craving for some nearer contact with the historic God of Israel, his sudden perception of how little a man can accomplish, and his consequent weariness of life—all these things are portrayed with marvellous insight and delicacy, and invest the character of Elijah with a singular naturalness and charm.

1. withal had better be omitted: it is an attempt to reproduce an ungrammatical expression of the Hebrew text, which is found in no ancient version.

2. Jezebel's threat is in reality a confession of impotence; if she had dared to kill Elijah she would not have sent him this warning. Her object is to frighten him out of the country. The

life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his 3
life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's 4
journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

LXX prefaces her asseveration with the words: 'As sure as you are Elijah, and I am Jezebel,'

3. Read, as margin (with LXX, &c.), 'And he was afraid.' The scribes shrank from speaking of Elijah and fear in one breath.

Beer-sheba ('Well of the Oath,' see Gen. xxvi. 33) is still called *Bîr es-Seba'*, and marks the southern limit of cultivation at a point midway between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea: hence the common O. T. phrase 'from Dan to Beer-sheba' (iv. 25, &c.).

which belongeth to Judah, and was therefore beyond the jurisdiction of Ahab and Jezebel. The expression is commonly regarded as a proof that the writer belonged to the northern kingdom; though what else he could have said if he *had* been a Judaean is not apparent. It is important to note that Beer-sheba was an ancient sacred place much frequented by pilgrims from North Israel even after the severance of the two kingdoms (see Amos v. 5, viii. 14). This may have had something to do in determining the direction of Elijah's flight.

4. The craving for complete solitude leads him a day's journey into the wilderness; and there, unseen by any human eye, he abandons himself to the bitterness of disenchantment and failure.

a juniper tree: strictly, 'a certain broom bush.' (The indefinite expression is repeated in verse 5, showing that there is some irregularity in the text. It is, however, unnecessary to delete the clause here as a gloss (Benzinger).) The Hebrew name *rōtem* is the same as the Arabic *retem*, which includes several species of *genista*. The shrub grows plentifully along the desert wadis between Palestine and Sinai, and its scanty shelter is taken advantage of, for want of better, by the Bedouin in pitching their tents.

for I am not better than my fathers. His strength is but a man's strength after all, and he has reached the limit of human endurance: life has become a useless burden, because he feels he can never again rise to the height of the effort that has failed.

5 And he lay down and slept under a juniper tree; and,
behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise
6 and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was at his
head a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water.
And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.
7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time,
and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the
8 journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat
and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty
days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

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5. an angel: LXX, 'some one.' On angels as intermediaries between God and the prophets, see xiii. 18; the idea is one of the indications that have been thought to point to late composition of the passage.

6. a cake . . . coals means simply a cake such as is baked on glowing stones (as we might speak of a griddle-cake).

7. the angel of the LORD may be the angel of verse 5, not necessarily the unique and mysterious being who is associated with the theophany in the earlier history (Gen. xvi. 7 ff., xxi. 17 ff., xxii. 11 ff.; Judges vi. 11 ff., xiii. 3, &c.).

8. unto Horeb the mount of God (Exod. iii. 1). On the whole, the narrative gives the impression that this was the goal of Elijah's pilgrimage from the first, though his strength failed him on the way (see verse 7). The source of the impulse might be twofold: (1) on the one hand, a desire to meet the God of Israel at the very place where the national covenant—now abrogated by national apostasy—had been formed. (2) On the other hand, there may be the idea, appearing elsewhere in the O. T., that Horeb continued to be the true dwelling-place of Yahweh even after the people had entered Canaan (Judges v. 4 f., Hab. iii. 3, &c.). In protesting against the popular identification of Yahweh with the local Baals, Elijah may have repudiated the notion that he was actually present in every Israelitish sanctuary, and have clung to the thought that he dwelt in awful majesty amid the thunder-clouds of Sinai. On either view his impulse was to get back to the historic origins of the national religion, and renew his faith by personal contact with the God he served. The name **Horeb** for the mount of the Law is characteristic of the Elohistic document of the Pentateuch (which is supposed to have been written in North Israel) and the Book of Deuteronomy. The writer appears to have vague ideas of its situation; the Sinai of

And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; 9
[Z] and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and
he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And 10
he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God
of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy
covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy pro-
phets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and
they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go 11
forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD.

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tradition could easily be reached from Beer-sheba in eight or ten days.

9^b-11^a. The verses seem out of place here, and spoil by anticipation the dramatic effect of the vision which follows. Verse 11^a would lead us to expect that Elijah stood on the mountain while the theophany took place; verse 13 shows that, on the contrary, he was still in the cave, and only came out when the more violent manifestations of the Divine presence had ceased. The contradiction is not removed by the LXX's addition of 'to-morrow.' The verses are perhaps a duplication of 13^b, 14 by a later hand (Wellhausen).

xix. 11^b-18. *The Theophany at Horeb.* Elijah is made to realize the presence of God in a spectacle and an experience which for grandeur and depth of conception could hardly be surpassed in literature. The Lord passes by arrayed in the terrors of storm, earthquake, and fire; but none of these bring home to the prophet the immediate sense of God. It is only in the audible stillness which succeeds the fire that he feels the mysterious attraction of the Divine, and, wrapping his face in his mantle, comes forth to the entrance of the cave. Then in answer to the heart-searching question, What doest thou here? he pours forth his complaint against his people; and after being commissioned to appoint the ministers of Divine vengeance, he is assured of the triumph, through fearful judgements, of the cause for which he had lived. The lesson of the theophany must be gathered from the revelation which accompanies it It is commonly conceived as a rebuke to the impetuous and fiery zeal of the prophet, and his reliance on violent methods for advancing the cause of God: he is supposed to learn here that not fire and storm but the still small voice is the fit emblem of the patient and gentle and silent operation of the spiritual forces by which the kingdom of God is built up. (See A. B. Davidson, *The Called of God*, ch. vi). But that interpretation, however attractive in itself, does not agree with the con-

[Ej] And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD
12 was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the
13 fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou
14 here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.
15 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to

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cluding message, which unfolds a vision of judgement more terrible than even Elijah could have wished. The significance of the theophany lies rather in its effort to express through the least sensuous of material symbols the spirituality of Yahweh. As compared with older representations, in which thunderstorm and earthquake appear as adequate vehicles of the Divine presence, this certainly indicates an advance in the conception of Yahweh's nature.

11. The narrative is resumed after the interpolation with the words: **And, behold, the LORD.**

12. a still small voice: *lit.* 'a sound of thin silence.' The expressive *oxymoron* finds a parallel in the *hendiadys* of Job iv. 16 ('silence and a voice').

13. wrapped his face: that he might not look on God and die (Gen. xxxii. 30; Exod. iii. 6, xxxiii. 20, &c.).

14. I have been very jealous. The words express the spirit of Elijah's ministry, consuming zeal for Yahweh and uncompromising opposition to every object of worship which sought to share with Him the honours of godhead. What the prophet complains of is the entire suppression of the religion of Yahweh, which is, historically considered, an exaggeration, though one that is natural in an emotional outburst.

15, 16. In answer to his complaint, Elijah is commanded to

the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest,
thou shalt anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: and 16
Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over
Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah
shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it 17
shall come to pass, that him that escapeth from the
sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth
from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet will I 18
leave *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which
have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath

'anoint' the three men who in different ways are to complete his reformation by the extirpation of Baal-worship—Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha. Such a commission clearly implies that his own life-work is practically over, and that his remaining time on earth will be short. The word 'anoint' is strictly applicable to the two kings; but there is no instance of the anointing of a prophet, and even in the case of Elisha the ceremony was not actually performed.

Abel-meholah (see iv. 12) is said by Eusebius (*Onomasticon*) to be in the Jordan valley, ten Roman miles south of Scythopolis (Beth-shan).

17. the sword of Hazael symbolizes the Syrian wars (cf. 2 Kings viii. 12), whose disastrous course is fully recorded in the subsequent narratives; that of **Jehu** refers to the massacres described in 2 Kings ix, x; but what is meant by the sword of **Elisha** the history does not reveal. There may have been a tradition of some stern measures directed by Elisha against the devotees of Baal, similar to Elijah's execution of the prophets at Carmel, although no trace of it appears in the documents preserved by the compiler. The whole course of events, indeed, was different from the forecast given in this verse. The sword of Hazael did not precede but followed the sword of Jehu; and the brunt of the Syrian wars fell most heavily on the house of Jehu himself, champion of Yahweh's cause though he was. The discrepancy illustrates the freedom and idealism of O. T. prediction, and proves beyond a doubt that the passage before us is no invention of a late writer with an eye on the fulfilment.

18. seven thousand is a round number for the faithful minority who will be spared in the judgement. It is an anticipation of the later prophetic doctrine of the Remnant, the pious kernel, the Israel within Israel, to whom belongs the promise of the future.

19 not kissed him. So he departed thence, and found
Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing, with twelve
yoke *of oxen* before him, and he with the twelfth: and
Elijah passed over unto him, and cast his mantle upon
20 him. And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and
said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother,
and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go

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hath not kissed him: cf. Hos. xiii. 2. The rite is also illustrated by the Mohammedan custom of kissing the Kaaba.

xix. 19–21. *The Call of Elisha.* Of the three commissions entrusted to Elijah in verses 15, 16, only one, and that the last of the three, is reported to have been actually carried out by him. We have, in fact, no record of the anointing of Hazael at all (see on 2 Kings viii. 7–15); the account of the anointing of Jehu by an emissary of Elisha (2 Kings ix) is taken from an independent source, which represents an older tradition than that presupposed by this narrative. The history of Elijah must have related these incidents in a form corresponding to verses 15, 16, and presumably in the order there prescribed. This points to the conclusion that there is a lacuna in the Elijah-document between verses 18 and 19; and the inference is strengthened by the observation that verse 19 is not the natural continuation of verses 15–18. The explicit command to go straight to Damascus by the desert (verse 15) could not without explanation be followed by the statement that the prophet went straight to the middle Jordan valley instead. We may assume, therefore, that in the original document verse 19 was preceded immediately by the account of the anointing of Jehu, and that 'thence' (wherever it may have been) Elijah went to Abel-meholah, where he found Elisha, and threw his mantle over him. The symbolic action was correctly interpreted by Elisha, and after a farewell feast with his parents and friends he followed Elijah as his personal attendant.

19. he departed thence: see above. The **mantle** of Elijah appears again in 2 Kings ii. 13, 14 as the symbol (and vehicle) of his prophetic gift (cf. 2 Kings i. 8, marg.). The garment of skin covered with the hair seems then, as in later times (Zech. xiii. 4; Matt. iii. 4), to have been the distinctive garb of the prophet.

20. Cf. Luke ix. 61. While Elisha's request is natural and intelligible, the answer of Elijah is perplexing. The easiest explanation (though not quite convincing) is that Elijah grants his request, and adds that he has done nothing to him that need interfere with such an expression of human affection. Other senses suggested are: 'Go by all means, yet [consider] what I

back again; for what have I done to thee? And he 21
returned from following him, and took the yoke of oxen,
and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments
of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat.
Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered
unto him.

[N] And Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his 20

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have done to thee'; or, 'Go, and come back [to me], for [understand] what I have.'

21. from following him: better, 'from behind him,' or simply, 'from him.'

the yoke of oxen: the pair which he himself had been guiding (verse 19). The act signifies for Elisha the breaking up of the old life and associations. That he bade farewell also to his parents, though not stated, is to be understood.

xx. *Ahab's Victories over the Syrians.*

The chapter records a phase of the long conflict between Israel and Syria, which had commenced in the reign of Baasha (xv. 18 ff.), and lasted with intermissions till the time of Jeroboam II (see verse 34). Owing to the imperfection of the record (see below) it is impossible to say for certain to what period of Ahab's reign the incidents are to be assigned. The probability is that ch. xxii was the immediate sequel of ch. xx in the original document to which both belong; and that consequently the events here related took place about three years before the death of Ahab. A still more interesting question is whether they preceded or followed the battle of Ḳarḳar, which was fought in 854 B.C., and is one of the leading synchronisms between Hebrew and Assyrian history. An inscription of Shalmaneser II tells how in that year he met and defeated at Ḳarḳar, in the vicinity of Hamath, a strong coalition of Syrian princes; and amongst the names of the confederates are those of Bir'idri (or Dad'idri) of Damascus (evidently the head of the league) and Ahab of Israel, who is said to have furnished a contingent of 2,000 chariots and 10,000 men (see *COT*, p. 196). The identity of Ben-hadad with the Bir'idri of the inscription cannot be doubted: see on verse 1. Here then we find Ahab and Ben-hadad fighting side by side against a common enemy, and the question is how their co-operation is to be explained in the light of the narrative before us. Two constructions suggest themselves: (1) Ahab may have been the friendly but independent ally of Ben-hadad at Ḳarḳar; in which case it is natural to

host together: and there were thirty and two kings with him, and horses and chariots: and he went up and

suppose that the fighting of ch. xx was over before that event, and that the alliance was the result of Ahab's singular generosity in the hour of victory, as related in verses 32–34. (2) Ahab may have been the vassal of Ben-hadad, and compelled to fight in the ranks of the anti-Assyrian league. Such a relation between the two sovereigns seems implied in verses 3 f.; hence the most probable inference would be that *after* the battle of Ḳarḳar Ahab made an effort to recover his independence, with the results narrated in this chapter. Recent historians seem pretty equally divided between these two views, and the point remains for the present in suspense. But if the Hebrew chronology is to be strictly followed, the death of Ahab must have taken place in the same year as the battle of Ḳarḳar (see Introd. p. 46).

The source from which the narrative (along with xxii. 1–38) is taken seems to be a popular history of the northern kingdom, written from a political rather than a religious standpoint, and exhibiting the character and policy of Ahab in a much more favourable light than is the case in ch. xvii–xix or xxi. The author's admiration for the gallantry and chivalry of his hero is apparent throughout; it compels the sympathy of the reader in spite of the darker features emphasized in the other sections of the history. It is evident that such a delineation of Ahab's personality cannot come from the same pen as the biography of Elijah in ch. xvii–xix; and that conclusion is confirmed by other points of difference, such as the attitude of Ahab towards the prophets, the absence of any allusion to the worship of Baal or the work of Elijah, and the introduction of Micaiah the son of Imlah as the solitary representative of true prophecy. Since the narrative is too copious and graphic for the official annals, we must regard it as an extract from a larger independent work, in which the earlier history of the Syrian wars was probably related with the fullness of historical knowledge which characterizes the chapters before us. Whether the passages have literary affinities with any of the other documents used by the compiler is a matter which can be considered later (see on 2 Kings iii, vi. 25 ff., and ix–x): for the reign of Ahab at least they stand entirely by themselves.

xx. 1–22. *The Siege and Relief of Samaria.* The narrative presupposes (*a*) an attempt by Ahab to escape from the relation of vassalage in which he had hitherto stood to Damascus; and probably (*b*) a series of reverses in the field, which had laid open the capital to the Syrian army. Of these circumstances some account was no doubt contained in the part of the document which has been omitted (see above). The story is taken up at the point

besieged Samaria, and fought against it. And he sent 2
messengers to Ahab king of Israel, into the city, and
said unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad, Thy silver and 3
thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even

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where Ben-hadad, having invested Samaria, proposes to Ahab humiliating terms of surrender. It is difficult to see wherein the second proposal (verses 5 f.) differs from the first (verse 3); but at all events Ahab was ready to accept the first, but flings back the second with a spirited and memorable defiance. While the drunken Ben-hadad issues orders for an assault on the city, Ahab leads out his forces against him, and (by a stratagem?) secures a complete victory over the Syrians. The description of the battle is very obscure.

1. The verse shows traces of amplification. A comparison of the Hebrew with the LXX suggests that the original may have been: 'And Ben-hadad collected his whole army, and came up and laid siege to Samaria.'

On the **thirty and two kings**, see verse 24.

Ben-hadad ('Son of [the god] Hadad') is the name given to three Syrian kings in the O.T. (cf. xv. 18; 2 Kings xiii. 24). Winckler (and Cheyne) would reduce them to two by identifying the king here mentioned with the Ben-hadad of xv. 18; but that, though chronologically possible, is in contradiction with the allusion of xx. 34. The name in Shalmaneser's inscription is read by some Assyriologists as *Dad'idri*, by others as *Bir'idri*. If the former reading be correct, the real name of the king must have been Hadadezer (2 Sam. viii. 3, &c.), and he is here called Ben-hadad by confusion with the name of his father Ben-hadad I. It is much more probable, however, that the true form is Bir'idri, and that this has been transformed into Ben-hadad by two easily intelligible processes: (1) the Hebrew *Bēn-* ('son') was substituted for the Aramaic *Bar-* (it would be a mistaken etymology, but that does not matter); and (2) the last consonant *R* was changed to *D*. (Winckler, *Alttest. Untersuchungen*, p. 68 ff.) This theory is confirmed by the fact that an intermediate stage is represented by the LXX, which invariably reads 'son of Hader.'

3 ff. The negotiations are difficult to understand. Commentators have tried hard to make out a tangible difference between the first and the second demand of Ben-hadad; but their explanations are all unsatisfying, and no single view can be carried through. The best is perhaps Wellhausen's, which is based on the LXX reading of verse 7 (see below) and an emendation in verse 3, which makes the last clause read 'but thy wives and thy children are *thine*.' (The phrase **even the goodliest** is not in the LXX.) On this

4 the goodliest, are mine. And the king of Israel answered
and said, It is according to thy saying, my lord, O king;
5 I am thine, and all that I have. And the messengers
came again, and said, Thus speaketh Ben-hadad, saying,
I sent indeed unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me
thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children;
6 but I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about
this time, and they shall search thine house, and the
houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever
is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand,
7 and take it away. Then the king of Israel called all the
elders of the land, and said, Mark, I pray you, and see
how this man seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for
my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and

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view Ahab consents to the surrender of his silver and gold, but not of his wives and children, a distinction intelligible enough in itself, but hardly in accordance with the language of verses 4, 5. Others hold that in the first instance Ben-hadad asks only for the sacrifice of Ahab's personal possessions, while in the second he demands the surrender of the city; that, however, lays an emphasis on the words 'and the houses of thy servants' (verse 6) which the construction does not warrant. Another view (which is naturally suggested by the contrast of verses 5 and 6, but finds no support in verse 7) is that Ahab, while ready to yield all that is asked, resents the indignity of having his palace ransacked by the minions of Ben-hadad. It is possible that the confusion was in the mind of the writer himself, who may have reported the circumstances at second-hand, without a clear perception of the precise point at issue.

5, 6. The expression for **but** at the beginning of verse 6 is usually preceded by a *negative* sentence; hence Klostermann amends verse 5 so as to read, 'I did *not* send to thee, saying, Thou shalt *give* me . . .; *but* to-morrow I will send . . . and they shall *take* it,' bringing out the contrast between a voluntary surrender and a humiliating search.

For **pleasant in thine eyes** it is better to read, with LXX, 'pleasant in their eyes.'

7. The LXX rendering referred to above is: 'for he has sent to me for my wives and for my sons [and for my daughters]; my silver and my gold I have not withheld from him.'

for my gold; and I denied him not. And all the elders 8
and all the people said unto him, Hearken thou not,
neither consent. Wherefore he said unto the messengers 9
of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst
send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this
thing I may not do. And the messengers departed, and
brought him word again. And Ben-hadad sent unto 10
him, and said, The gods do so unto me, and more also,
if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all
the people that follow me. And the king of Israel 11
answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth
on *his armour* boast himself as he that putteth it off.
And it came to pass, when *Ben-hadad* heard this message, 12
as he was drinking, he and the kings, in the pavilions,
that he said unto his servants, Set *yourselves in array*.
And they set *themselves in array* against the city. And, 13
behold, a prophet came near unto Ahab king of Israel,
and said, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou seen all this
great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand
this day; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.
And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith 14

10. Ben-hadad boasts that he has men enough to pulverize the city and carry it away in handfuls.

11. Tell him. The LXX reads more forcibly, 'Enough[1]!' Ahab's reply is a pithy proverb, to which parallels can be found in any language; cf. the Latin, *Ne triumphum canas ante victoriam.*

12. in the pavilions: strictly, 'booths,' temporary shelters for soldiers in the field (cf. 2 Sam. xi. 11). The word **Set** is a technical military term, which may be understood either of the formation of storming parties or (as marg.) of the erection of battering engines: the one view is just as likely to be correct as the other (cf. Ezek. xxiii. 24).

13, 14. The intervention of a prophet at this juncture appears to many critics uncalled-for and incredible; but the two verses

[1] רב לך *for* רברו.

the LORD, By the young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall begin the battle? And
15 he answered, Thou. Then he mustered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty two: and after them he mustered all the people, even all the children of Israel, being seven
16 thousand. And they went out at noon. But Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the
17 kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him. And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; and Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, saying,
18 There are men come out from Samaria. And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive.
19 So these went out of the city, the young men of the princes of the provinces, and the army which followed

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seem too closely wrought into the narrative to be treated as an interpolation. Apart from them we have no explanation of the very peculiar mode of attack adopted by Ahab.

15. young men . . . provinces: servants of the provincial governors. The word for **province** (*mĕdînāh*) is used in the O. T. only in its primary sense of 'administrative district,' and always in late books except here. In Syriac and Arabic it is the common word for 'city.' Why these men were chosen to lead the sally does not appear. The view of some commentators, that they were sent out as non-combatants with an army concealed behind them, has little foundation in the text. They seem to have gone out alone (verse 17); and so far as the victory can be explained by natural causes, it was due to the drunken folly of Ben-hadad, in breaking up his battle-line to capture the insignificant band alive (verse 18).

17. and Ben-hadad sent: better, as LXX, 'and they sent and told Ben-hadad.'

19. and the army which followed them. If they had been followed by an army (of 7,000 men) Ben-hadad would have been in no doubt whether they meant peace or war; moreover the army must have been with the king when he issued from the city (verse 21). There are other indications of textual disorder, which might be remedied if (with Doorninck and Kittel) we transpose

them. And they slew every one his man; and the 20
Syrians fled, and Israel pursued them: and Ben-hadad
the king of Syria escaped on an horse with horsemen.
And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses 21
and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.
And the prophet came near to the king of Israel, and 22
said unto him, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see
what thou doest: for at the return of the year the king
of Syria will come up against thee.

And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, 23
Their god is a god of the hills; therefore they were
stronger than we: but let us fight against them in the
plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. And 24
do this thing; take the kings away, every man out of his
place, and put captains in their room: and number thee 25

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verses 20 and 21, and render the passage thus: '(19) And when these had gone out from the city . . . (21) the king of Israel went out with the army after them, and captured (so LXX) the horses and chariots . . . (20) And they smote each his man, and the Syrians fled and Israel pursued them, and Ben-hadad the king of Syria escaped on a chariot horse.'

22. The prophet warns Ahab that the Syrians will renew the attack in the following year.

xx. 23–34. *The Syrians defeated at Aphek.* The counsellors of Ben-hadad explain his defeat by the theory that the Hebrew deities, as hill-gods, had naturally proved invincible in the hilly country round Samaria; and advise him to try conclusions with them next time in the plains. Accordingly, in the following year, the two armies meet at Aphek, in the Plain of Sharon, where Ahab, again encouraged by the anonymous prophet, achieves a still more brilliant victory over the Syrian host. Ben-hadad abjectly sues for his life, but is received by Ahab with royal honours and set at liberty, after engaging to restore the cities which his father had conquered, and to grant certain trading rights in Damascus to Israelitish subjects.

24. The idea underlying the verse seems to be that the Syrian army was composed of thirty-two corps (see xxii. 31), that these had originally been commanded by feudatory kings, who are now to be replaced by Syrian officers. But the term rendered **captains** means 'satraps' (*paḥôth*, a loan-word, see on x. 15), which implies

an army, like the army that thou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot: and we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. And he hearkened unto their voice, and did so.
26 And it came to pass at the return of the year, that Ben-hadad mustered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek,
27 to fight against Israel. And the children of Israel were mustered, and were victualled, and went against them: and the children of Israel encamped before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the
28 country. And a man of God came near and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, Because the Syrians have said, The LORD is a god of the hills, but he is not a god of the valleys; therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye
29 shall know that I am the LORD. And they encamped one over against the other seven days. And so it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined; and the children of Israel slew of the Syrians an hundred
30 thousand footmen in one day. But the rest fled to

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a rearrangement of civil administration rather than a reorganization of the army. The verse is possibly an interpolation.

26. at the return of the year: cf. 2 Sam. xi. 1, 'the time when kings go out to battle.'

Aphek appears to have regularly served as the base for the Syrian invasions of Israel (see 2 Kings xiii. 17). Its situation is much disputed. Most probably it is to be identified with the Aphek of 1 Sam. xxix. 1, and lay in the northern part of the Plain of Sharon (see on 2 Kings xiii. 22; and cf. G. A. Smith in *EB*, i. c. 191 f.).

27. and were victualled is a somewhat peculiar notice, omitted by the LXX. Benzinger's conjecture that the word is a corruption of a place-name, the rendezvous of the Israelites, deserves consideration. The word rendered 'little flocks' occurs only here, and is of uncertain signification. Nor does it appear why the Israelites are compared to *two* flocks, instead of one.

28. Read, with marg., 'the' man of God, the same individual as in verses 13, 22. See on xii. 22.

Aphek, into the city; and the wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand men that were left. And Ben-hadad fled, and came into the city, into an inner chamber. And his servants said unto him, Behold now, we have 31
heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings: let us, we pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel: peradventure he will save thy life. So they 32
girded sackcloth on their loins, and *put* ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, Is he yet alive? he is my brother. Now the 33
men observed diligently, and hasted to catch whether it were his mind; and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad. Then he said, Go ye, bring him. Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the

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30. the wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand cannot be understood otherwise than literally: Benzinger's suggestion that it is a figurative way of saying that that number perished when the wall was taken is not admissible. No doubt the numbers, both in this verse and the preceding, excite surprise.

into an inner chamber: *lit.* 'chamber for chamber,' or 'a chamber within a chamber': the expression recurs in xxii. 25, 2 Kings ix. 2.

31. This tribute to the humanity of the Hebrew kings, which is probably a reflection of the national character, is extremely interesting.

ropes upon our heads cannot well mean 'halters round our necks,' like the burghers of Calais before Edward III. Although the custom is not elsewhere mentioned in the O. T., the rope was probably at one time the headgear of the humblest classes (see Nowack, *Archäologie*, i. p. 125); and, like the sackcloth on the loins, was assumed by others as a mark of the deepest humiliation.

33. Render, 'Now the men took it as an omen, and eagerly snatched it from him, and said' (cf. LXX, 'caught up the word from his mouth'); i.e. they seize on the word 'brother,' which had fallen from Ahab's lips, and hold him to it.

34 chariot. And *Ben-hadad* said unto him, The cities which my father took from thy father I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. And I, *said Ahab*, will let thee go with this covenant. So he made a covenant with him, and let him go.

35 [Z] And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said

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34. We learn here for the first time that Omri had been obliged, not only to cede territory to Damascus, but to grant trading facilities to Aramaean merchants in Samaria. Ahab now secures similar privileges for his subjects in Damascus.

streets, or 'bazaars'; cf. the Arabic *sûk*, which has the same double sense.

And I, said Ahab. There can be no doubt that the words are Ahab's; but something indicating the change of speaker must have fallen out of the text. To change the verb, with Wellhausen, to second person, 'thou shalt let me go,' is less natural.

xx. 35-43. *Ahab's Leniency denounced by a Prophet.* The clemency shown by Ahab to his fallen foe, whether well-advised or fatuous, was no doubt severely criticized by many of his subjects; and in no quarter was dissatisfaction more likely to be felt than in those nurseries of religious and patriotic enthusiasm, the prophetic schools. A member of one of these fraternities gives expression to this feeling by an acted parable, in which he plays the part of a man wounded in the recent fight, who had incurred the forfeit of his life by letting slip a prisoner who had been committed to his charge. Having put this case before the king, and been refused redress, he suddenly throws off his disguise, and (like Nathan on a well-known occasion) shows the astonished Ahab that he has unwittingly passed sentence on himself. For setting free an enemy who had fallen under Yahweh's ban he and his people would have to bear the penalty that ought to have been exacted of the conquered Syrian. The incident, if genuine, throws an important light on the fierce excitement prevailing in the prophetic societies of the time. At the same time, the section embodies a judgement on Ahab's conduct, which is certainly not prepared for by what goes before; and there are striking coincidences with ch. xiii, which, together with the want of any connexion with what precedes or follows, have led several writers (like Wellhausen), to assign the passage to a late period. It is worthy of mention, however, that the verses as a whole made on Kuenen the impression of high antiquity.

35. the sons of the prophets, here mentioned for the first

unto his fellow by the word of the LORD, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refused to smite him. Then 36
said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him. Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray 37
thee. And the man smote him, smiting and wounding him. So the prophet departed, and waited for the king 38
by the way, and disguised himself with his headband

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time, frequently appear in the subsequent history (2 Kings ii, *passim*, iv. 1, 38, v. 22, vi. 1, ix. 1), always, except here, in connexion with the work of Elisha. In Semitic idiom the phrase (*bnê hannĕbî'îm*) means no more than 'members of the prophetic guilds' or communities, of which the individual member might be described indifferently as *nābî'* simply (verse 38; 2 Kings ix. 4), or as *ben nābî'* (Amos vii. 14). Prophecy in Israel had been from the first a social phenomenon, gathering men together in companies, and drawing susceptible natures into its circle (1 Sam. x. 10 ff., xix. 20 ff.); and it is not unlikely that between the times of Samuel and Elisha a somewhat stricter organization of these societies had been developed. The little we know of their manner of life is gathered from the passages just referred to. We learn that they had fixed settlements, probably in connexion with local sanctuaries (Beth-el, Gilgal, &c.: 2 Kings ii); that though coenobites (iv. 38 ff., vi. 1 ff.) they were not celibates (iv. 1 ff.); and that they were supported in part by charitable gifts of the laity (iv. 42, v. 22). They appear to have acknowledged Elisha as their head, but that they were the personal disciples of him or any other great prophet is nowhere suggested. It is therefore only in a very loose sense that such communities can be spoken of as 'schools'; and the traditional idea that they were theological seminaries for the training of candidates for the prophetic office is altogether misleading.

by the word of the LORD. See on xiii. 1.

36. Other points of resemblance to ch. xiii are the requirement of mechanical obedience to a prophetic oracle, and the punishment of disobedience by the agency of a lion.

38. his headband: rather, 'a bandage.' The word (*'ăphēr*) occurs only here and verse 41; but the meaning is guaranteed by Assyrian. The A. V. followed the Vulg. in reading *'ēpher*, 'with ashes upon his face.'

39 over his eyes. And as the king passed by, he cried
unto the king: and he said, Thy servant went out into
the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned
aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this
man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life
be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver.
40 And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was
gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, So shall
41 thy judgement be; thyself hast decided it. And he
hasted, and took the headband away from his eyes; and
the king of Israel discerned him that he was of the
42 prophets. And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD,
Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man whom
I had devoted to destruction, therefore thy life shall go
43 for his life, and thy people for his people. And the king
of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and
came to Samaria.

21 [Ej²] And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth

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40. busy here and there: *lit.* 'doing those things and those.' But all ancient versions read more appropriately, 'looking here and there.'

41. discerned him that he was of the prophets. It would seem, though there is no other evidence of the fact, that the prophets at this time bore some distinctive mark on their persons, which could be concealed by a bandage over the eyes.

42. the man . . . destruction: *lit.* 'the man of my ban' (cf. Isa. xxxiv. 5). The Hebrew word is *ḥērem*, which is used in its strict and original sense of dedication to utter destruction of the spoils of war (see Driver, *Notes on Samuel*, p. 100 ff.).

43. heavy and displeased: cf. xxi. 4.

xxi. *Naboth's Vineyard.*

The chapter obviously breaks the connexion between ch. xx and xxii; and it is possible that it may have stood originally after ch. xix, as in the LXX. By the majority of critics it is regarded as the continuation of the history of Elijah in ch. xvii–xix. The arguments for that view are not convincing, although they do

the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard
by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And Ahab 2

undoubtedly show that ch. xxi is much more closely akin to ch. xvii–xix than to ch. xx, xxii. The most noticeable points of affinity are the prominence given to Elijah, and the conception of the character of Ahab as a weak man dominated by the strong-willed and unscrupulous Jezebel. The irascible question of verse 20, moreover, presupposes some previous encounter between the king and the prophet, such as that of xviii. 17. On the other side, it has to be observed that (1) there is nothing to indicate that the central interest of the writer of ch. xxi is the personality of Elijah. (2) The career of Elijah finds its natural termination in the appointment of his successor, and it is not just probable that the same author should after that introduce him again on the stage of public affairs. The only natural place for the incident in the life of Elijah would be between verses 18 and 19 of ch. xix. But (3) it has been remarked by Ewald that the murder of Naboth probably did more to bring about the revolution in which the house of Omri perished than the religious policy of Ahab; and it may be added that the contest on Carmel becomes much more intelligible on the supposition that the heart of the people had been already stirred by the knowledge of this hideous crime: that, however, is impossible if ch. xxi be the sequel to ch. xix. (4) Ch. xxi, unlike ch. xvii–xix, has been manipulated by the compiler, whose hand is clearly recognizable in the style of verses 20ᵇ–24. The narrative is in fact closely parallel to xiv. 1–16 (cf. xvi. 1–4): it gives the usual prophetic announcement of the downfall of the dynasty, and the rôle ascribed to Elijah is not more prominent than that of Ahijah the Shilonite, or Jehu the son of Hanani in the earlier incidents. If, therefore, the passage was extracted from a history of Elijah, it would appear to have been a different document from ch. xvii–xix, as well as from ch. xx, xxii. Burney tries to prove that ch. xxi belongs to the same source as 2 Kings ix. 1—x. 28; but his reasoning appears one-sided and inconclusive (see his *Notes*, p. 210 ff.).

xxi. 1–4. *Naboth's Refusal to sell his Vineyard.* The tragic incident originates in a perfectly reasonable and just proposal of Ahab to his humble neighbour Naboth for the purchase of a vineyard closely adjoining the palace at Jezreel. Naboth, however, true to the conservative instincts of his class, refuses on religious grounds to alienate his patrimony. The king takes this unexpected thwarting of his wish so much to heart that he retires to his couch, refusing to eat till Jezebel comes to his assistance.

1. The LXX does not contain the words, **after these things,** nor the superfluous clause, **which was in Jezreel.** Jezreel was

spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house; and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it: or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the
3 worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of
4 my fathers unto thee. And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face,
5 and would eat no bread. But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that
6 thou eatest no bread? And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please

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apparently the summer residence of Ahab—a second capital where some of the most thrilling events of the time were transacted (xviii. 46; 2 Kings ix. 16 ff., 30 ff.). It is the modern *Zer'în*, at the head of the valley of the same name, which descends eastward towards the Jordan. Naboth is here a Jezreelite, as in 2 Kings ix. 21, 25 f.; the writer of xxii. 38 seems to have followed a different tradition which transferred the incident to Samaria.

3. See Lev. xxv. 23 ff., Num. xxxvi. 7 ff.

4. The first half of the verse (down to **fathers**) is wanting in the LXX, which reads instead, 'And the spirit of Ahab was troubled.' With this change the linguistic resemblance to xx. 43 disappears.

turned away his face—to the wall; cf. 2 Kings xx. 2. The LXX has, 'covered his face.'

xxi. 5–16. *Jezebel compasses the Death of Naboth and the Confiscation of his Property.* The queen, having ascertained the cause of her lord's disquietude, affects surprise at his pusillanimity, and undertakes to put him in secure possession of Naboth's vineyard. She issues an order to the elders of Jezreel to have Naboth put on his trial on a trumped-up charge of treason. Her directions are carried out to the letter by the obsequious elders, Naboth and his sons being publicly stoned to death outside the city. Ahab

thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. And 7
Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. So she wrote letters in Ahab's 8
name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, *and* that dwelt with Naboth. And she wrote in the 9
letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people: and set two men, sons of Belial, 10
before him, and let them bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst curse God and the king. And then

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then goes down (from Samaria?) to take formal possession of the vineyard.

7. Dost thou . . . ? Better, 'Dost thou now exercise royal authority over Israel?' In other words, 'What is the good of being a king, if you cannot have your way in so trifling a matter?'

8. Ahab and Jezebel would seem to have been living at the time in Samaria.

nobles, or 'freemen': an Aramaic word, elsewhere found only in late passages (especially Nehemiah). It may be here a gloss on 'elders.' On the latter, see on viii. 2. The LXX omits 'that were in his city.'

9. Proclaim a fast. Fasting is everywhere in the O. T. a sign of humiliation before God. The idea here seems to be that the community lies under the anger of the Deity, on account of a grave crime committed by one of its members, which is to be exposed and punished. The place 'at the head of' **the people** (marg.) which Naboth is to occupy can hardly be the seat of honour; it must be the place commonly assigned to the accused and the witnesses in the judicial assembly.

10. two men: as witnesses, in accordance with law and usage (Deut. xvii. 6, xix. 15; Matt. xxvi. 60).

sons of Belial: worthless fellows (see marg.), with no character to lose, and easily bribed for any ill purpose.

Thou didst curse: cf. Exod. xxii. 28. The word for **curse** is a euphemism = 'bless' (as Job i. 5, &c.), used perhaps in the sense of 'bid farewell to,' hence 'renounce' or 'disown' (Davidson, *Camb. Bible*, on Job).

11 carry him out, and stone him, that he die. And the
men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who
dwelt in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them,
according as it was written in the letters which she had
12 sent unto them. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth
13 on high among the people. And the two men, sons of
Belial, came in and sat before him: and the men of
Belial bare witness against him, even against Naboth, in
the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did curse
God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of
the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.
14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned,
15 and is dead. And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard
that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said
to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth
the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money:
16 for Naboth is not alive, but dead. And it came to pass,
when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose
up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite,
to take possession of it.
17 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite,

15. From 2 Kings ix. 26 we learn that Naboth's sons were also slain, as was perhaps necessary for the success of Jezebel's scheme. The freehold, being left without an heir, is confiscated to the crown.

16. to go down. Samaria stands over 1,000 feet higher than Jezreel. An unnatural refinement of hypocrisy is attributed to Ahab by the LXX, which says that on hearing of the death of Naboth he 'rent his garments and put on sackcloth.' Cf. verse 27.

xxi. 17–29. *Elijah's Encounter with Ahab.* The suddenness of the prophet's appearance, in the very flush of Ahab's guilty satisfaction, is represented with great power in the opening verses. Unfortunately, the original narrative is broken off in the middle of verse 20, and replaced by a speech whose phrases betray the hand of the compiler. In this oracle there is no reference either to Ahab's personal fate or to the murder of

saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, 18
which dwelleth in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard
of Naboth, whither he is gone down to take possession
of it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus 19
saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken pos-
session? and thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus
saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood
of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. And 20
Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?
And he answered, I have found thee: [D] because thou
hast sold thyself to do that which is evil in the sight of
the LORD. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will 21

Naboth (verse 23 being an interpolation); but simply an announcement of the retribution that was to overtake his descendants, on account of his religious delinquencies. The last three verses, describing Ahab's repentance and the postponement of the judgement, may, however, be part of the old narrative, since the doom pronounced on Ahab in verse 19 was actually transferred (in substance) to his son (2 Kings ix. 24 ff.).

18. The clause, **which dwelleth** (strictly, *is*) **in Samaria,** can only mean that Ahab was to be found at that moment in Samaria; it was not necessary to tell Elijah where the king usually dwelt. But Ahab was at the moment in Jezreel; hence the words must be a gloss added by some one who supposed that Naboth, though a native of Jezreel, had his vineyard in Samaria (see xxii. 38). Benzinger, indeed, thinks that this may have been the view of the writer of the chapter, though it is inconsistent with 2 Kings ix. 21, 26.

19. Hast thou killed ...? The real character of Ahab's conduct is unmasked by this pointed sarcasm: it was as certain that he was the murderer as it was evident that he had taken possession.

In the place. There was no literal fulfilment of this threat; see on xxii. 38, 2 Kings ix. 24 ff.

20ª. Hast thou found me? Cf. xviii. 17: from being the 'troubler of Israel' Elijah has become the personal enemy of Ahab. Surely something more than is recorded must have passed between them.

20ᵇ. because introduces the protasis to verse 21. The Deuteronomic addition commences here: cf. the language with xi. 6, &c., and 2 Kings xvii. 7.

21, 22. Cf. xiv. 10, 16.

utterly sweep thee away, and will cut off from Ahab
every man child, and him that is shut up and him that
22 is left at large in Israel: and I will make thine house
like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like
the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provo-
cation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and
23 hast made Israel to sin. [Z] And of Jezebel also spake
the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the
24 rampart of Jezreel. [D] Him that dieth of Ahab in the
city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field
25 shall the fowls of the air eat. [D²] (But there was none
like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to do that which
was evil in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife
26 stirred up. And he did very abominably in following
idols, according to all that the Amorites did, whom the
27 LORD cast out before the children of Israel.) [Ej²] And
it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he
rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and
28 fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the
word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,
29 Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me?

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23. The verse breaks the flow of the Deuteronomic address. It is impossible to say whether it is a fragment of Elijah's original message or an interpolation based on 2 Kings ix. 36. In either case it is better to read, with some ancient versions, 'portion' (*ḥēlek*), instead of **rampart** (*ḥēl*).

24. See xiv. 11.

25, 26 have been added by a still later hand (the second redactor). Their purpose is to counteract the impression apt to be made by verse 22, by pointing out that in reality no king had been so wicked as Ahab, and none had had so bad a wife. For **But** render 'Only,' or 'However.'

27–29 record a modification of the original penalty (verse 19), in consequence of Ahab's professions of penitence, which may have been quite sincere. The rending of the garments and the wearing of sackcloth are closely associated signs of mourning, which have become conventional in the O. T., and whose primary

because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

[N] And they continued three years without war **22**
between Syria and Israel. And it came to pass in the **2**
third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came

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significance is therefore obscure. Possibly both denote a reversion to the primitive clothing of a pre-historic age, the rough hair loin-cloth being substituted for ordinary civilized apparel (see on xx. 31). The LXX here repeats its assertion that Ahab 'put on sackcloth on the day when they killed Naboth the Jezreelite' (verse 16).

xxii. 1–40. *The Death of Ahab.*

See the introductory note on ch. xx. The present section is the continuation of that chapter. Ben-hadad had violated the treaty of Aphek by refusing to surrender the frontier city of Ramoth-gilead, and after three years' truce Ahab resolves to assert his rights by force. The chronicler, who as a rule ignores the history of the northern kingdom, inserts this passage as an incident in the reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xviii).

xxii. 1-12. *The Expedition resolved on: Consultation of the Prophets.* In the third year after the battle of Aphek Ahab calls a council of his officers, and reminds them that Ramoth-gilead has never been evacuated by the Syrians, and must now be recovered by force. He sends for his vassal Jehoshaphat of Judah, who promises to support him with his whole army. At Jehoshaphat's request, however, a convocation of prophets is first held, and four hundred prophets, led by a certain Zedekiah, unanimously predict the success of the enterprise. Jehoshaphat is still unsatisfied; and Ahab has to admit that there was one man whose presence he had not thought desirable, because of the uniformly unfavourable character of his oracles. Nevertheless, at Jehoshaphat's urgent request, Micaiah the son of Imlah is summoned to give his advice.

2. The mention of Jehoshaphat's visit at this point gives rise to the impression that it was his presence in Samaria which suggested to Ahab the idea of an alliance against Syria. That is little likely to have been the case. He embarks on the expedition with evident reluctance, and would probably have kept out of it if he had been free to refuse. It is held by some that the marriage of Jehoshaphat's son to Ahab's daughter (2 Kings viii. 18) implies that Judah was at this time a vassal-state of Israel, and bound to

3 down to the king of Israel. And the king of Israel said
unto his servants, Know ye that Ramoth-gilead is ours,
and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the
4 king of Syria? And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt
thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And
Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as thou
art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.
5 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire,
6 I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to-day. Then the
king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four
hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against
Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they
said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand
7 of the king. But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here
besides a prophet of the LORD, that we might inquire
8 of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat,
There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the

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render military service when called upon. Hence Klostermann and Benzinger transpose 2^{b} to the end of verse 4: Ahab first decides on the expedition, and then calls on Jehoshaphat to join him, on which the latter comes to Samaria.

3. Ramoth-gilead. See on iv. 13. On the authority of Eusebius, who says it was fifteen Roman miles west of Philadelphia, it has usually been identified with *es-Salt* (eighteen miles north of the Dead Sea), or the ruins of *el-Jal'ūḍ*, six miles further north. But both these sites, as well as *Jerāsh*, twenty-two miles north-east of *es-Salt*, are much too far south for iv. 13; and the locality is probably to be sought on the Yarmuk, in the neighbourhood of Edre'i (see G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.* p. 587, and Cooke's note in Driver's *Deuteronomy*, p. xviii). The maps show in that region a place *Remtheh*, which might suit: but Smith seems inclined to identify it with Ramoth-mizpeh (Joshua xiii. 26).

4. See on verse 2. The courtesy of the communications need not be more than diplomatic.

5. For **to-day** render (as in i. 51) 'first of all.'

6. Ahab can still command the services of some four hundred prophets of Yahweh, a fact which reveals the difference of standpoint between this document and the Life of Elijah.

LORD, Micaiah the son of Imlah: but I hate him; for
he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.
And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. Then 9
the king of Israel called an officer, and said, Fetch
quickly Micaiah the son of Imlah. Now the king of 10
Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on
his throne, arrayed in their robes, in an open place at
the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets
prophesied before them. And Zedekiah the son of 11
Chenaanah made him horns of iron, and said, Thus
saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the Syrians,
until they be consumed. And all the prophets prophesied 12
so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for
the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king.
And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake unto 13

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8. The solitary representative of the higher prophecy—the prophecy which is true to itself, and utters its presage of disaster regardless of the superficial enthusiasms which others mistake for inspiration—is **Micaiah the son of Imlah.** He is a man of kindred spirit with Elijah, and like him a true precursor of the ethical prophecy of the following centuries (cf. Jer. xxviii. 8). The passage is important, as the first instance of a cleavage in the ranks of the prophetic body, which runs through the whole subsequent history of the movement.

10. arrayed in their robes (*lit.* 'clad in clothes'): LXX, 'in full armour.' The phrase 'in a threshing-floor' (marg.) is difficult to understand, and might be a corrupt repetition of the word for 'clothes.' Another suggestion is that it contained a specification of the kind of clothes meant; but it cannot be said, in view of verse 30, that such a specification is indispensable.

11. Cf. Jer. xxviii, where a prophet of the type of Zedekiah employs a similar symbolic action in support of a false prediction.

xxii. 13-28. *The Prophet of Evil.* In the meantime Micaiah has been prompted by the officer sent to fetch him, and urged to fall into line with the other prophets, who had spoken as the king wished. Strangely enough, his first answer to Ahab's question is identical with theirs. Something in his tone, however, convinces Ahab that he is not speaking his inmost thought, and he adjures him to utter the whole truth. Micaiah then unfolds his reading

him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets *declare* good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and
14 speak thou good. And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.
15 And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go up, and prosper; and the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of
16 the king. And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou speak unto me
17 nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD? And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master; let them return every man to

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of the situation by relating two visions that had come to him. The first—a vision of Israel as a shepherdless flock, scattered on the mountains—is a veiled prediction of Ahab's death. The second penetrates still more deeply into the Divine purpose, and is remarkable for the judgement it pronounces on the origin of false prophecy. He has stood in the council of heaven, and seen how the Lord commissioned the spirit to utter through the court-prophets false oracles that should lure Ahab to his doom. Such an estimate of the perplexing phenomenon of spurious prophecy bears the stamp of antiquity. Jeremiah and Ezekiel denounced the false prophets of their time as men who spoke 'from their own heart,' without inspiration; Micaiah, on the contrary, believes his opponents to be inspired, but inspired to prophesy lies. The import of his revelation, therefore, is that the expedition is decreed of Yahweh and must proceed, but that it is decreed in anger and destined to end disastrously for Israel. For his uncompromising attitude he is smitten on the cheek by Zedekiah, and by Ahab's orders sent to prison till his return.

13. the words of the prophets. Read, with LXX, 'the prophets have spoken'—with one mouth good, &c.

14. Cf. Num. xxii. 38.

16. adjure thee: i. e. 'make thee swear.'

17. as sheep that have no shepherd: Num. xxvii. 17; Matt. ix. 36.

his house in peace. And the king of Israel said to 18
Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would not
prophesy good concerning me, but evil? And he said, 19
Therefore hear thou the word of the LORD: I saw the
LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven
standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And 20
the LORD said, Who shall entice Ahab, that he may go
up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this
manner; and another said on that manner. And there 21
came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said,

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18. Ahab seeks to remove the depressing effect of the oracle on the mind of Jehoshaphat by insinuating that it proceeds from personal animosity; and Micaiah answers in verse

19. 'Not so!' (the LXX text is here preferable to the Heb. 'Therefore'), disclosing the source of his certainty by narrating a second vision.

the host of heaven: perhaps the earliest instance of the use of this expression. Most frequently it denotes the stars, but here (as in Neh. ix. 6^{b}, Dan. iv. 35, and perhaps Isa. xxiv. 21) it is evident that angelic ministers of Yahweh are meant: these are called 'host of heaven' because, like Yahweh Himself, they have their dwelling-place there. (See further, Driver in *DB*, ii. p. 429 f.)

21. a spirit: Heb. 'the spirit.' Hebrew idiom does not absolutely preclude the indefinite rendering, but the article has probably in this case its natural force; and the question arises, what spirit is meant? The spirit is evidently the personified principle of prophecy, the superhuman power which was recognized as the source of the prophetic ecstasy. In other passages these manifestations are ascribed directly to the spirit of Yahweh (1 Sam. x. 10, &c.), i. e. to the direct action of God on the prophets. Here the spirit is an independent personal agent, and it is difficult to say how this idea is related to the simpler conception of the immediate Divine inspiration of the prophets, or what judgement is expressed on the worth of the more excited forms of inspiration exhibited by Zedekiah and his fellows. It is certainly remarkable that Micaiah claims to have a truer knowledge of God's will than that imparted by the spirit; and still more remarkable that the spirit himself becomes, for a special purpose, a 'lying spirit.' The falsification of prophecy appears to be traced, not to the imperfection of its human medium, but to the supernatural source from which it emanates. To our minds, such a theory of prophecy involves

22 I will entice him. And the LORD said unto him, Where-
with? And he said, I will go forth, and will be a lying
spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said,
Thou shalt entice him, and shalt prevail also: go forth,
23 and do so. Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put
a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets; and
24 the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee. Then
Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and smote
Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the
25 spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee? And
Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see on that day, when
thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.
26 And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry
him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to
27 Joash the king's son; and say, Thus saith the king, Put
this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of
affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in
28 peace. And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace,
the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said, Hear,
ye peoples, all of you.

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moral difficulties greater than those it solves; but it is enough that it enabled a true prophet to hold fast his faith, in spite of the fact that men possessed by a spirit not their own were prophesying what he knew to be a lie.

24. To Zedekiah, at all events, the author of all prophecy is **the spirit of the LORD**. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of this man's belief in his own inspiration.

25. The ultimate criterion on which Micaiah relies is the fulfilment of the prediction (cf. verse 28; Deut. xviii. 21 f.; Jer. xxviii. 9). In reality Micaiah utters a fresh prediction, of the nature of a sign, as did Jeremiah in similar circumstances (xxviii. 16 f.).

into an inner chamber. See on xx. 30.

26. Joash, the son of Ahab, is not elsewhere mentioned.

28. And he said, Hear ... The clause, which is wanting in the LXX, is a citation of the opening words of the canonical Book of Micah (i. 2). It is the marginal gloss of an uncritical reader who erroneously identified the two prophets.

So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of 29
Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. And the king of 30
Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and
go into the battle; but put thou on thy robes. And the
king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle.
Now the king of Syria had commanded the thirty and 31
two captains of his chariots, saying, Fight neither with
small nor great, save only with the king of Israel. And 32
it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw
Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it is the king of

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xxii. 29-38. *The Battle.* Undeterred by the warning just uttered, the two kings proceed to battle; though Ahab takes the precaution of disguising himself as a common soldier. The Syrian captains, having received orders to direct all their efforts against the king of Israel, at first surrounded Jehoshaphat, but ceased to press him on discovering that he was not the man they sought. The arrow of destiny was shot at random by an unknown Syrian bowman, and it penetrated the joints of Ahab's armour, inflicting a mortal wound. The king, however, was propped up in his chariot, and kept his place in the fighting line till the evening, when he died. It is to be inferred that the battle had gone in favour of Israel, though the fruits of victory were lost when the cry went through the host that the king was dead, causing the troops to disperse to their homes. The body of Ahab was brought to Samaria and there buried; and a late writer found a meagre fulfilment of Elijah's prophecy (xxi. 19) in the circumstance that the blood washed from his chariot was lapped by dogs at the pool of Samaria.

30. Ahab's disguising of himself covers neither a cowardly design to save his own life by the sacrifice of Jehoshaphat's nor a chivalrous resolve to share the risks of the common soldier. It merely reveals his secret anxiety lest Micaiah's vision should come true, and is perhaps dictated by the superstitious notion that by changing his identity he can escape the notice of the unseen powers of evil. That he was aware of Ben-hadad's orders concerning him (verse 31) we can hardly suppose.

31. On the number 32, see on xx. 24. It is not given in 2 Chron. xviii. 30, and may have been inserted in the text either from xx. 1 or xx. 24. The command itself is a striking tribute to Ahab's prowess.

32. Seeing only one Richmond in the field the captains

Israel; and they turned aside to fight against him: and
33 Jehoshaphat cried out. And it came to pass, when the
captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of
34 Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him. And
a certain man drew his bow at a venture, and smote the
king of Israel between the joints of the harness: where-
fore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine
hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am sore
35 wounded. And the battle increased that day: and the
king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and
died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into
36 the bottom of the chariot. And there went a cry
throughout the host about the going down of the sun,
saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his
37 country. So the king died, and was brought to Samaria;

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naturally took him for the king of Israel. For **turned aside against him** it is better to read, with LXX and 2 Chron. xviii. 31, 'surrounded him.' The cry of Jehoshaphat was probably a shout to his men. The chronicler understood it to be a prayer to God, and adds that 'the Lord helped him,' &c. Similarly LXX (L).

34. at a venture: *lit.* 'in his innocence' (cf. marg.), never dreaming that his arrow was to decide the battle. The word rendered in marg. 'lower armour' probably denotes the *tassets* or jointed appendages of the cuirass, covering the abdomen. The shaft thus entered 'between the tassets and the breastplate,' wounding the lower part of the body.

out of the host: better, as LXX and Chronicles, 'out of the battle.'

35. The first impulse of the wounded king had been to withdraw from the field; but noting the increasing fierceness of the conflict he seems to have determined to remain and see it through.

and died at even. Read, as 2 Chron. xviii. 34, 'until the even.' LXX has 'from morn till even,' and adds the words 'and he died at even' at the end of the verse, which is probably right.

36. 'And the shrill cry passed through the camp,' &c.

37. The verse should read (continuing verse 36), 'for the king is dead. And they came to Samaria, and buried the king,' &c.

and they buried the king in Samaria. [Z] And they 38
washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria; and the
dogs licked up his blood; (now the harlots washed
themselves *there*;) according unto the word of the LORD
which he spake. [D] Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, 39
and all that he did, and the ivory house which he built,
and all the cities that he built, are they not written
in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?
So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son 40
reigned in his stead.

And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over 41

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38 seems to have been added by a later hand, in order to bring the end of Ahab into some sort of correspondence with the doom pronounced by Elijah, after the murder of Naboth (xxi. 19). It misses the essential point that Ahab was to die *in the same place* as Naboth (i. e. outside Jezreel), and overlooks the fact that this sentence was afterwards suspended and transferred from Ahab to his son (xxi. 29). An interpretation so strained and so disparaging to Ahab is little likely to have suggested itself to the author of ch. xx, xxii, who besides had no occasion to refer to a prophecy recorded only in a separate document.

xxii. 39, 40. *Concluding Formula.* The long account of the reign is wound up by the compiler with the usual reference to the chronicles of Israel. Incidentally we learn that (1) Ahab had built an **ivory house** (i. e. a palace lavishly ornamented with ivory: cf. Amos iii. 15; Ps. xlv. 8; Canticles vii. 4), and (2) had fortified a number of cities.

xxii. 41–50. *Jehoshaphat of Judah.*

The most important political events of the reign are recorded in their connexion in the history of the northern kingdom (xxii. 1–38; 2 Kings iii), and the section devoted specially to Jehoshaphat consists mainly of the editorial framework. In the concluding formula, however, two annalistic notices have been preserved (verses 46–49 = Hebrew, 47–50). In the LXX the whole section stood originally before xvi. 29 (see the note there). This is the case both in the Vatican MS. (B) and in the Lucianic recension; although the former repeats it here, with some variations and the omission of verses 46–49, and adopting of course the Hebrew chronology.

xxii. 41–44. *Introduction.*

42 Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. Jehoshaphat was thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.
43 And he walked in all the way of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD: howbeit the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense
44 in the high places. And Jehoshaphat made peace with the
45 king of Israel. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the
46 kings of Judah? [KJ] And the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he put
47 away out of the land. And there was no king in Edom:
48 a deputy was king. Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish

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41. the fourth year of Ahab. See on xvi. 29.

43. the high places. See on iii. 2, 3, xv. 14.

xxii. 46-49. *An Expedition to Ophir planned and frustrated.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xx. 35-37.) The traffic with Ophir had probably been discontinued since the days of Solomon. The recovery, under unknown circumstances, of the suzerainty over Edom presented an opportunity to reopen it; and with this object in view Jehoshaphat caused a large ship to be built at Ezion-geber. The vessel, however, was wrecked in that port; and this so discouraged Jehoshaphat that he refused to join Ahaziah of Israel in a second venture. The chronicler's version of the incident is slightly different. According to him, Ahaziah had been a partner in the enterprise from the first (which is in itself probable, since Jehoshaphat was no doubt still a vassal of Israel); and the shipwreck put an end to the hopes of both. Ahaziah began to reign in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, so that the incident belongs to the later period of the latter's reign.

46. Cf. xv. 12.

47. no king in Edom. Some years later (2 Kings iii) we find that there was again a king in Edom, who however was obviously a vassal of Jehoshaphat.

a deputy was king. The two Hebrew words which compose this clause may be taken with the following verse, and slightly

to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber. Then said Ahaziah the son 49
of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not.
[D] And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was 50
buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel 51
in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel. And 52
he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherein he made Israel to sin. And he served Baal, 53
and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD, the God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

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changed so as to read: 'And the deputy of king Jehoshaphat made.' (So Stade and others, following out a hint suggested by the LXX.) The construction thus obtained is more natural than the ordinary renderings.

48. ships of Tarshish. See on x. 22. The LXX has the sing. 'ship' throughout, and even the Hebrew contains an indication that this was the original reading. On **Ophir** and **Ezion-geber,** see on ix. 26, 28.

1 Kings xxii. 51—2 Kings i. 18. *Ahaziah of Israel.*

xxii. 51–53 (= Hebrew, 52-54). *Introduction.*

51. in the seventeenth year. The statement reveals an irregularity which has crept somehow into the Hebrew chronological system. Reckoning from verse 41, the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat would bring us only to the twentieth year of Ahab, whose reign lasted twenty-two years. LXX (L) avoids the inaccuracy by adhering to what seems to have been the original scheme of the LXX (see on xvi. 29 and xxii. 41), reading, 'in the twenty-fourth year[1].' It is curious that the same mode of reckoning has invaded the Hebrew text in 2 Kings i. 17.

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[1] First year of Ahab = second of Jehoshaphat (xvi. 29); therefore twenty-second of Ahab = twenty-third of Jehoshaphat, and first of Ahaziah = twenty-fourth of Jehoshaphat. See Introduction, p. 40.

THE
SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS

1 [KI] AND Moab rebelled against Israel after the death
2 of Ahab. [Ej³] And Ahaziah fell down through the

i. 1. *The Revolt of Moab.* The verse is a short annalistic notice of the revolt, a fuller account of which is reserved for the reign of Jehoram (ch. iii). It is difficult to explain its insertion at this point. Benzinger surmises that it may have been the introduction to a narrative of the struggle which once stood here, but was afterwards removed because of its inconsistency with ch. iii. But that is scarcely credible, unless we assume that ch. iii was added after the compilation of the book; and if we do make that assumption it is just as likely that the verse contains all that the compiler intended to record about the incident. The discussion of the historical situation may be deferred till we come to ch. iii. (On the division of the original Book of Kings into two at this point, see Introduction, p. 3.)

i. 2–17ª. *Elijah predicts the Death of Ahaziah.* Ahaziah had fallen through a lattice in the upper chamber of his palace, and sends to a heathen oracle in the Philistine city of Ekron to inquire whether he should recover from his injuries. The event furnished the occasion of Elijah's last public appearance as a prophet and champion of the national religion. After giving a terrible demonstration of his preternatural power, he is brought to the bedside of the king and announces his impending death.

The source from which the narrative is taken belongs to the cycle of prophetic biographies of which we have so many examples in this part of the history. By some recent critics, verses 2–8 are regarded as the original kernel of the passage, and assigned to the same author as 1 Kings xvii–xix, xxi; the remainder (9–16) being treated as a legendary supplement of much later date. One point in favour of the analysis is a peculiarity in the spelling of the name Elijah, in which verses 2–8 stand almost alone in the whole O. T.[1].

[1] The exact facts are these: the usual form אֵלִיָּהוּ is never used in verses 2–8, but four times in verses 9–16. The abbreviated form אֵלִיָּה occurs three times in verses 2–8, and once in verses 9–16. The only other place in the O. T. where the shorter form is used is Mal. iv. 5 [= Hebrew, iii. 23].

lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this sickness. But the angel of the LORD 3

But it is evident that if this fact makes against the unity of the present narrative, it militates equally against the view that verses 2–8 are from the same hand as 1 Kings xvii–xix or xxi. A certain disparity of conception between the two parts may be felt; and it must be admitted that the first half presents a conception of Elijah in no way incongruous with that of 1 Kings xvii–xix. At the same time the arguments against the combination of xxi with xvii–xix apply with equal force to this passage; and apart from the question of the homogeneity of the three narratives, the hypothesis of a late interpolation has not much utility.

2. The **lattice** (*lit.* 'network'—the same word as 1 Kings vii. 17 ff.) protected the aperture which served as a window in the **upper chamber.** The latter, in ordinary one-storied houses, consisted of a single room erected on the flat roof (see on iv. 10), and often with one or two of its walls continuous with those of the main building. In a royal palace the structure would not be so simple.

Baal-zebub means etymologically and according to tradition, 'Lord (or Baal) of flies,' i. e. probably a god who was supposed to send or remove the plague of flies. It would be in accordance with Semitic analogies if Zabub could be taken as a local designation; but if it were so, the god could hardly have been described as **the god of Ekron.** Cheyne thinks the name a corruption of Baal-zebul ('Lord of the high house'): cf. Beelzebul, Matt. x. 25 (R. V. marg.). There is certainly a connexion between these two names; though how the name of this obscure local deity came to be transferred to the 'prince of the devils' we do not know.

Ekron, the nearest to Israel of the five chief Philistine cities, is identified with *'Akir*, south-west from *er-Ramleh*, and about nine miles from the coast.

3. The **angel of the LORD** is here and in verse 15 the medium of prophetic revelation, a function not assigned to him in 1 Kings xvii–xix or xxi (with the doubtful and in any case trivial exception of xix. 7). The formula used in these narratives is 'the word of Yahweh came'; or (as in xix. 15 ff.) God speaks to Elijah face to face. In the patriarchal and other ancient records the angel of Yahweh is identified with Yahweh Himself, being in fact a personification of the theophany: or, to put it otherwise, he is Yahweh Himself in *visible* self-manifestation. But the present passage does not stand quite on the same level: the angel here is

said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it because there is no God in Israel, that ye go to
4 inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.
5 And Elijah departed. And the messengers returned unto him, and he said unto them, Why is it that ye are
6 returned? And they said unto him, There came up a man to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Is it because there is no God in Israel, that thou sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from the bed
7 whither thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which
8 came up to meet you, and told you these words? And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is
9 Elijah the Tishbite. Then *the king* sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of the hill. And he spake unto him, O man of God, the king hath said,

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simply an individual angel—one of the many messengers who execute Yahweh's behests.

Is it because, &c. Elijah's 'jealousy' for the Lord God of Hosts comes out in this indignant question.

8. an hairy man (*lit.* 'possessor of hair'): i. e. one clothed with a garment of hair; see on 1 Kings xix. 19.

The **girdle** (W. R. Smith, 'waistcloth') **of leather** is not elsewhere referred to in the O. T. (cf. Mark i. 6).

9 ff. The calling down of fire from heaven on the presumptuous soldiery is the only painful episode in all the histories of Elijah; and it is difficult to think that the author of ch. xvii xix would have lowered the moral grandeur of his hero by so extravagant a display of superhuman power.

Come down. And Elijah answered and said to the 10
captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, let fire come
down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty.
And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed
him and his fifty. And again he sent unto him another 11
captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and
said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said,
Come down quickly. And Elijah answered and said 12
unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down
from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the
fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him
and his fifty. And again he sent the captain of a third 13
fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went
up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and
besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray
thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants,
be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down 14
from heaven, and consumed the two former captains of
fifty with their fifties: but now let my life be precious in
thy sight. And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, 15
Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he
arose, and went down with him unto the king. And he 16
said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou
hast sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of
Ekron, is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire
of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down from
the bed whither thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

11. And he answered is probably a scribal error for 'And he went up' (as verses 9, 13).

13. the captain of a third fifty: rather, as LXX (L), 'a third captain of fifty.' The behaviour of this third captain illustrates the respect due to a prophet, which it is obviously the writer's design to inculcate.

16. is it because . . . word? The words are a gloss from verses 3, 6, and should be omitted, with LXX.

17 So he died according to the word of the LORD which
Elijah had spoken. [D] And Jehoram began to reign in
his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of
Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son.
18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are
they not written in the book of the chronicles of the
kings of Israel?

2 [Es] And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up

i. 17[b], 18. *Conclusion.* The formula is irregular in several respects. (1) Verse 18 ought to precede 17[b], and between the two there should be the notice of the king's burial. (2) The synchronism in verse 17 belongs to the introductory formula of the succeeding reign. (3) That synchronism ('in the second year of Jehoram') is based on the system peculiar to the LXX (see on 1 Kings xxii. 51), and is at variance with the scheme of the Hebrew text (cf. iii. 1). Now, we are here confronted by a very intricate problem of textual criticism. The MSS. of the LXX exhibit great variations; but they agree in inserting at this point the introductory notice on Jehoram of Israel (a parallel to iii. 1–3). And they continue significantly: 'And the anger of the Lord was kindled against the house of Ahab,' which looks very like a preface to the extirpation of the dynasty recorded in ch. ix, x. Further, it must be observed that if the chronological system of the LXX was ever consistently carried out in any series of MSS., the reign of Jehoram of Judah (viii. 16–24) must have been placed between those of Ahaziah and Jehoram of Israel. All these facts, together with others to be noted later (viii. 16, ix. 29), go to show that the disorder in this passage is connected with sweeping operations on the text, in the course of which the independent Elisha-narratives (see below) were freely transposed in accordance with the views of different editors.

17. After **Jehoram** insert with LXX (L), 'his brother.'

in the second year begins a new sentence, a fragment of the introductory formula of Jehoram of Israel (see above).

ii. *Elijah succeeded by Elisha.*

That the chapter belongs to the mass of prophetic literature that had gathered round the names of the two great northern prophets is obvious. As there was a Life of Elijah (see on 1 Kings xvii–xix), so there must have been a Life of Elisha, or at least a collection of traditions and anecdotes respecting Elisha, a large number of which are preserved in the earlier part of 2 Kings (ch. ii, iv–

Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven, that Elijah went with
Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry 2

vii, viii. 1–15, xiii. 14–21). These may be supposed to have been reduced to writing by the sons of the prophets in various localities, and afterwards put loosely together, either in an independent work or as an appendix to the history of Elijah. There is no reason to doubt that these narratives faithfully reflect the general character of Elisha's work, which touched life at much lower levels than that of his great predecessor. For reasons stated below, the account of Elijah's translation in verses 1–18 is to be regarded as the introduction to the group of Elisha-narratives, rather than the close of the biography of Elijah.

ii. 1–18. *The Translation of Elijah.* Elijah, accompanied by Elisha, pays a series of farewell visits to the prophetic communities in the vicinity of the Jordan valley; and at each place finds the presentiment of his approaching departure echoed by members of the local fraternity. The two then cross the Jordan together, into the region where Moses lay buried in a grave which no man knew. Elisha, who has persistently refused to leave his master, asks as a last request that he may be so endowed with the spirit of Elijah as to be able to continue his work. Elijah's answer is hesitating and conditional: if a spiritual vision of the translation be vouchsafed to him, then he will know that his prayer is granted. Suddenly, as they walk together, they are separated by a chariot and horses of fire; and Elijah is caught up into heaven. Elisha, understanding the significance of the vision for himself, takes up the mantle that had fallen from Elijah; and with it repeats the miracle of dividing the Jordan, thus proving himself the successor of Elijah. Fifty prophets who witnessed the scene at once acknowledge him as the head of their order, though their lingering doubts of the reality of Elijah's translation are not removed till they have searched the district for three days.

The narrative would undoubtedly form in every respect a worthy sequel to 1 Kings xvii-xix; but it contains some features which show that we have to do with a different writing. (1) Elijah's close personal relations with the prophetic guilds is nowhere alluded to in any of the Elijah-narratives, and is not in keeping with the impression of solitariness which is reflected from all these records. It might of course be supposed that he had changed his manner of life before the end (Ewald); but the feeling remains that we have rather to do with distinct conceptions of his career. (2) In 1 Kings xix Elisha is already designated as Elijah's successor and invested with his mantle; here, on the contrary, the succession is still doubtful, and contingent on an event which is hidden even from Elijah himself. (3) The

here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me as far as Beth-el. And Elisha said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went
3 down to Beth-el. And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know it;
4 hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to
5 Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came near to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold
6 ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will
7 not leave thee. And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood over against

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writer of 1 Kings xix. 15 ff. could scarcely have thought of Elijah as 'The chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof' (cf. xiii. 14). When we consider that the incident marks the beginning of Elisha's ministry as much as the close of Elijah's, we naturally assign it to the series of narratives with which it has the closest affinities, those, namely, pertaining to the Life of Elisha.

1. Gilgal is spoken of as if it were the ordinary residence of Elijah and Elisha (cf. iv. 38). Since they 'went down' to Beth-el (verse 2) it cannot be the Gilgal of Joshua iv. 19, which lay between Jericho and the Jordan. There must have been many *gilgals* (cromlechs) in the country, and the one here meant must have been in the central high land, perhaps the present *Jiljilia*, about seven miles north of Beth-el (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.* p. 494).

3. On **sons of the prophets**, see on 1 Kings xx. 35.

4. Jericho. See on 1 Kings xvi. 34.

7. The fifty men are witnesses of the double miracle of dividing the water (verse 15); but not, of course, of what took place on the further side.

them afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. And 8
Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and
smote the waters, and they were divided hither and
thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. And 9
it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah
said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before
I be taken from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let
a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, 10
Thou hast asked a hard thing: *nevertheless*, if thou see
me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee;
but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as 11
they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared*
a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which parted them
both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into
heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my 12
father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!

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9. a double portion is rightly explained in the margin as the portion of the firstborn son, which was twice as much as that of the other sons (Deut. xxi. 17). It requires some hardihood to take the expression literally, and then prove by a comparison of miracles that Elisha was really twice as great a prophet as Elijah (Ecclus. xlviii. 12). The burden of Elisha's petition is that he may be worthy to succeed Elijah as head of the prophetic body.

thy spirit. See verse 15.

10. The vision of heavenly realities is withheld from ordinary men (see vi. 17); if that gift should be bestowed on Elisha, it will be the sign that God has answered his prayer.

11. a chariot of fire, &c. The religious imagination had clothed the idea of Yahweh's omnipotence in forms derived from earthly warfare; his heavenly army contained horses and chariots invisible to mortal eyes, composed of the fiery element in which Yahweh dwells. Passages to be compared are vi. 17; Hab. iii. 8 f.; Ps. lxviii. 17. The conception is related on the one hand to the name Yahweh of Hosts, and perhaps on its lower mythological side to the horses and chariots of the sun-god, of which we read in xxiii. 11.

12. the chariots of Israel. The apostrophe is more probably addressed to Elijah himself than to the chariots, &c., which had borne him away. This at least is the only kind of reference possible

And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own
13 clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also
the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back,
14 and stood by the bank of Jordan. And he took the
mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters,
and said, Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah? and
when he also had smitten the waters, they were divided
15 hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when
the sons of the prophets which were at Jericho over
against him saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth
rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed
16 themselves to the ground before him. And they said
unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty
strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy
master: lest peradventure the spirit of the LORD hath
taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or
7 into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send. And
when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send.
They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three

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in xiii. 14; the meaning in both cases would be that the prophet was a greater strength to his nation than all its chariots and horses.

13. the mantle of Elijah. See on 1 Kings xix. 19.

14. he also: answering to marg., 'even he.' Both renderings are at fault. The Hebrew phrase (*'aph hû'*) should be read *'ephô'*: it does not need to be translated, being merely an intensive particle adding emphasis to the preceding question.

15. The words **at Jericho** must have come in by mistake (see verse 7); the bed of the Jordan is not visible from Jericho. By **the spirit of Elijah** these prophets understand the Divine energy as the source of thaumaturgic power; and this is probably the sense of Elisha's prayer also (verse 9).

16. lest peradventure the spirit. See 1 Kings xviii. 12. The suddenness and mystery of Elijah's appearances and disappearances had given rise to the belief that he was transported hither and thither by the spirit of the Lord: for the idea, cf. Ezek. iii. 14, viii. 3, xi. 1, 24, &c., where, however, the condition is ecstatic.

days, but found him not. And they came back to him, 18
while he tarried at Jericho; and he said unto them, Did
I not say unto you, Go not?

And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, we 19
pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord
seeth: but the water is naught, and the land miscarrieth.
And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. 20
And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto 21
the spring of the waters, and cast salt therein, and said,
Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there
shall not be from thence any more death or miscarrying.
So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the 22
word of Elisha which he spake.

And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he 23
was going up by the way, there came forth little children
out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go
up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he 24

ii. 19-22. *Healing of the Waters of Jericho.* The passage embodies a local tradition to the effect that the principal fountain of Jericho owed its salubrious qualities to a miracle performed on it by Elisha. The *'Ain es-Sultan*, a perennial fountain of sweet and palatable water rising at the foot of the ruins of the ancient city, is sometimes called the Fountain of Elisha; and is no doubt the source referred to here. Its previous badness seems to have consisted in some occult influence supposed to emanate from it, which had produced frequent abortions throughout the region.

19. miscarrieth: rather, 'causes miscarriages.' The marginal rendering, however, is defensible; see Mal. iii. 11.

21. miscarrying is the same word as in verse 19, although we should have expected a substantive in place of a participle.

22. unto this day. The narrative, therefore, was written some time after the incident.

ii. 23-25. *Elisha and the Children of Beth-el.* On his homeward journey, passing through Beth-el, Elisha is insulted by a crowd of young boys, and curses them in the name of his God. Two she-bears come out of the wood and rend forty-two of their number. The story is recorded (like i. 9 ff.) to enforce the lesson of respect for the office and person of the prophet.

23. The insult lies in the derisive epithet **bald head**, baldness

looked behind him and saw them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of
25 them. And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.

3 [D] Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign

being counted a disgrace in antiquity. The Arabs are said to distinguish between crown-baldness, which is called the baldness of slaves, and forehead-baldness, which is called noble baldness, as due to the pressure of a helmet (Macalister, in *DB*, i. p. 235). Cf. Isa. iii. 17–24.

25. returned to Samaria. Wellhausen has suggested that the original document may have read 'to Gilgal,' in accordance with verse 1, and that Samaria was substituted by an editor to give a more natural connexion with ch. iii. But the word **returned** may refer to the circuitous route described, from Beth-el to Carmel and *back* to Samaria.

iii. *Jehoram of Israel. The Moabite Campaign.*

The introductory formula (verses 1–3) is, of course, from the pen of the compiler. The remainder of the chapter is the history of a joint-expedition of Jehoram and his allies against Moab, during which the united armies were saved from destruction by the instrumentality of the prophet Elisha. Wellhausen and most critics consider that the main interest of the writer was in the political events he describes, that therefore the passage belongs to the same class of popular histories as 1 Kings xx, xxii, and was in fact composed by the author of these two chapters. Some, however (Benzinger and Kittel), hold that the whole passage only serves as a background for the Elisha-episode, and is accordingly to be regarded as an extract from the biography of Elisha. The point is not easy to determine. There are undoubtedly some striking resemblances to 1 Kings xx, xxii, which strongly favour the view of Wellhausen: cf. verses 7, 11 with xxii. 4, 5, 7; and note the frequent tendency to omit the proper names of the several kings. On the other hand, there are indications which seem to point in an opposite direction. Thus it is urged that in this chapter it is a sufficient introduction of Elisha to say that he had been the servant of Elijah (verse 11), and that this is not likely to be the continuation of a document in which the existence of Elijah himself is so completely ignored as in 1 Kings xx, xxii. And again, there are at least two phrases which seem formed after the style of the Elijah-history: cf. verse 14 with xvii. 1,

over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. And 2
he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the pillar of Baal that his father had made. Nevertheless 3
he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

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and verse 20 with xviii. 29, 36. But we have seen that 1 Kings xx, xxii are not purely political: the narrative has been utilized as the basis of a series of pictures illustrating the influence of the prophets; and we may readily suppose that here the continuation of that narrative has been similarly treated, and perhaps partly rewritten. That the prophet in this case happens to be Elisha is an insufficient reason for assigning the whole to the cycle of Elisha-stories, with which it has little in common. (See Introd. p. 28 f.)

The historicity of the record is vouched for in essential respects by the discovery at Dibon of the famous Moabite Stone, erected to commemorate the successful revolt of Moab against Israel. In the inscription Mesha himself relates how his land had been oppressed by Omri of Israel 'many days,' and afterwards by his son, how the land of Medeba had been occupied by Israel during 'his [Omri's] days and half his son's days, forty years,' and how by the help of Chemosh his god he had gradually expelled the invaders, capturing their strongholds one by one and massacring or enslaving the inhabitants (see Bennett in *DB*, iii. p. 404 ff.; and Burney, p. 371 ff.). According to this account the revolt broke out, not after the death of Ahab (as i. 1, iii. 5), but in the middle of his reign; moreover, in the biblical chronology the united reigns of Omri and Ahab amount to less than forty years. These are the only points in which the two records are directly in conflict; in all other respects they may be used to supplement one another. The events recorded in this chapter belong to a period subsequent to the Moabite inscription; it describes an attempt (but apparently an unsuccessful attempt) of Jehoram to restore the Israelitish supremacy over Moab.

iii. 1–3. *Introduction.* See on i. 17 f.

2. For pillar (i. e. *mazzēbāh*, see on 1 Kings xiv. 23) the LXX reads the plural 'pillars.' The reformation here attributed to Jehoram must have been very partial, since the worship of the Tyrian Baal was still in full exercise at the time of Jehu's revolution.

4 [N] Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster; and
he rendered unto the king of Israel the wool of an
hundred thousand lambs, and of an hundred thousand
5 rams. But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that
the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.
6 And king Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time, and
7 mustered all Israel. And he went and sent to Jeho-
shaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab
hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against
Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: I am as

iii. 4-10. *Preparations for the Invasion of Moab.* Since the death of Ahab, Mesha had withheld the annual tribute of wool which he had been accustomed to pay to the kings of Israel; and, as we learn from his inscription, had expelled the Israelites from his territory. In order to subdue this petty state Jehoram collects his entire army, and calls on his vassal Jehoshaphat[1] of Judah to take part in the expedition, which it was arranged should march round the Dead Sea and invade Moab from the south. On the route they are joined by the king of Edom, who must at this time have been Jehoshaphat's vassal. But the allied army suffered so severely from want of water that on reaching the Moabite frontier (the *Wadi el-Aḥsā*) advance and retreat seemed alike impossible, and Jehoram's courage utterly failed him.

4. a sheepmaster: Heb. *nōḳēḏ* (cf. Amos i. 1), a keeper of the peculiar stunted and short-legged breed of sheep still called by the Arabs *naḳad*, and highly esteemed on account of its wool.

he rendered. The verb is frequentative: 'used to render,' year by year. The tribute seems excessive, and it is not clear whether it consisted in the animals or only in their fleeces, or whether the explicative accusative **wool** applies to the rams alone (see marg.).

5. Cf. i. 1; and see introductory note above.

7. Cf. 1 Kings xxii. 4. The same relation of vassalage is here presupposed.

[1] LXX (L) substitutes the name of Ahaziah of Judah for that of Jehoshaphat in this chapter. The motive for the change is apparent. According to the chronological scheme of Lucian, Jehoram of Israel and Jehoshaphat were at no time contemporaries. It is, of course, possible that originally the name of the king of Judah was not given at all (Benzinger); but still, in view of verse 14, we can hardly doubt that Jehoshaphat was meant.

thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses. And he said, Which way shall we go up? And 8
he answered, The way of the wilderness of Edom. So 9
the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom: and they made a circuit of seven days' journey: and there was no water for the host, nor for the beasts that followed them. And the king of Israel said, 10
Alas! for the LORD hath called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab. But 1
Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may inquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, which poured water on

8. Which way? The question would be most natural in the mouth of Jehoshaphat, the subordinate party; unless we suppose that the narrative has been abridged, and that here we have the fragment of a consultation of Yahweh through some prophet (see below on verse 13). The choice of so circuitous a route is perhaps to be explained by the fact that Mesha had already fortified the cities in the northern part of his land in expectation of an attack.

9. the king of Edom. According to the annalistic statements of 1 Kings xxii. 47, 2 Kings viii. 20 there was no king of Edom at this time. For this reason Ewald thought it possible that the events really happened in the reign of Jehoram of Judah, and that the name of Jehoshaphat as the better-known king was substituted by mistake. But that is not probable, on account of verse 14.

10. the LORD hath called. The reference may be to prophetic oracles (like those of 1 Kings xxii) predicting a favourable issue of the campaign.

iii. 11-28. *Consultation of Elisha.* Jehoshaphat having discovered that the prophet Elisha is in the camp, the three kings visit him to seek the word of Yahweh. Elisha at first refuses to answer them, but afterwards relents out of consideration for the king of Judah, and calls for a minstrel. In the condition of prophetic excitation induced by the music, he gives directions for collecting an abundant supply of water which will be mysteriously sent to the armies; and adds a promise of complete victory over Moab.

11. Cf. 1 Kings xxii. 7.

which poured water: i. e. was the servitor of Elijah (1 Kings xix. 21).

12 the hands of Elijah. And Jehoshaphat said, The word
of the LORD is with him. So the king of Israel and
Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.
13 And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to
do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and
to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel
said unto him, Nay: for the LORD hath called these three
kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab.
14 And Elisha said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before
whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the
presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not
15 look toward thee, nor see thee. But now bring me
a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel
played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him.
16 And he said, Thus saith the LORD, Make this valley full

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12. It is remarkable that, whereas in 1 Kings xxii Jehoshaphat knows nothing of the northern prophets and never inquires for Elijah, here he is so familiar with their names that he at once recognizes Elisha as a true man of God.

13. The words **and to the prophets of thy mother** are wanting in LXX (B), probably by mistake. In any case, by the **prophets of thy father** Elisha must mean Baal-prophets; for this sense alone gives point to Jehoram's reply: 'Nay, but it is Yahweh who,' &c. The reference is to prophetic oracles (like those of 1 Kings xxii), by which Yahweh had seemed to sanction the enterprise, though Jehoram now fears that they may prove to have been inspired by the 'lying spirit.'

15. And it came to pass: rather, 'And it used to be.' It is Elisha's habitual method of exciting the prophetic condition which is described. The association of religious music with the earlier and more violent exhibitions of prophecy in Israel is attested by 1 Sam. x. 5; and similar examples are found in Arabian literature (W. R. Smith, *Prophets*[2], p. 392). The practice had probably been kept up in the prophetic guilds with which Elisha was so closely associated.

the hand of the LORD is a frequent expression for the prophetic trance.

16. this valley. The scene of the miracle was the Wadi forming the frontier between Moab and Edom, whose upper reaches still bear the name *Wadi el-Aḥsā* ('valley of the sandy

of trenches. For thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not see 17
wind, neither shall ye see rain, yet that valley shall be
filled with water: and ye shall drink, both ye and your
cattle and your beasts. And this is but a light thing in 18
the sight of the LORD: he will also deliver the Moabites
into your hand. And ye shall smite every fenced city, 19
and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and
stop all fountains of water, and mar every good piece of
land with stones. And it came to pass in the morning, 20
about the time of offering the oblation, that, behold, there
came water by the way of Edom, and the country was
filled with water. Now when all the Moabites heard 21

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water-pits'). The peculiarity of the region is that the water from the mountains of Edom sinks beneath the surface, and is retained underground by the rocky bottom; so that a supply can almost always be obtained by digging pits in the sand. The tradition thus rests on accurate local knowledge; and the miracle consists, like the plagues of Egypt, in an enhancement of a natural phenomenon familiar to natives of the district (W. R. Smith, *OTJC*², p. 147)[1].

17. For **your cattle** read, as in verse 9, 'your host' (so LXX (L)).

19. and every choice city is a variant of the preceding clause, omitted by LXX. See further on verse 25 below.

20. about the time . . . oblation: cf. 1 Kings xviii. 29.

by the way of: 'from the direction of' Edom, i. e. from the south-east along the course of the Wadi. The pits are filled to overflowing by the water.

iii. 21–27. *Conquest and Devastation of Moab.* The Moabite levies guarding the frontier, deceived by the reflection of the morning light on the water-pits and thinking it blood, conclude

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[1] This follows the ordinary interpretation of verse 16. Burney, however (p. 270), points out that it is opposed by verses 22, 23, 'where the phenomenon described must have been produced by the sun shining upon *natural* and so irregular and wide-spreading *pools of water*, and not upon *artificial* and so (presumably) symmetrically shaped *trenches*.' The sentence reads literally: 'A making of this valley nothing but pits'; and this might quite well be rendered, 'I will make,' &c., so that human agency would be excluded.

that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered themselves together, all that were able to put on
22 armour, and upward, and stood on the border. And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water over against
23 them as red as blood: and they said, This is blood; the kings are surely destroyed, and they have smitten each
24 man his fellow: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil. And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: and they went forward into the land smiting the
25 Moabites. And they beat down the cities; and on every

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that the allies have fallen out and destroyed one another. As they rush in disorder to seize the spoil they are easily overpowered by the Israelitish army, which then presses forward into the country, destroying every mark of civilization as it goes. Mesha is at last driven, with the remains of his army, behind the walls of his capital, from which he makes a desperate sortie, in the hope of reaching the king of Edom. Being foiled in this attempt, he offers his firstborn son as a propitiation to Chemosh on the wall of the city; whereupon, in some way not explained, the fortune of war is reversed, and the Israelites are compelled to evacuate the country. The short narrative throws a lurid light on the barbarities of ancient warfare, and also on the deep-seated religious instincts which, in Israel as amongst its heathen neighbours, were appealed to by the rite of human sacrifice.

21. Read, 'Now all Moab had heard . . . and had been summoned together.'

22. as red as blood. It is clear from the context that the effect was due to the red rays of the morning sun shining upon the water.

23. This is blood: LXX, 'This is blood of the sword'—an attractive but impossible rendering!

are surely destroyed. Read, with marg., 'have surely fought together.'

24. and they went forward. Render, as LXX (with a very slight change of text), 'And they kept pressing forward, smiting the Moabites as they went.'

25. The methods of warfare described in the first part of the verse were universal in antiquity. 'In Arabian warfare the

good piece of land they cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the fountains of water, and felled all the good trees: until in Kir-hareseth *only* they left the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it. And when the king of Moab saw that 26
the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew sword, to break through unto the king of Edom: but they could not. Then he took his 27
eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall. And there was great wrath against Israel: and they departed from him, and returned to their own land.

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destruction of an enemy's palm-groves is a favourite exploit, and fertile lands are thus often reduced to desert' (W. R. Smith, *OTJC*[2], p. 369). Here they are sanctioned and even enjoined by a prophet; but in later times the attempt was made to soften their barbarity by legislation (Deut. xx. 19 f.).

The clause **until in Kir-hareseth . . . thereof** is very difficult, and the text so corrupt that we can only vaguely conjecture the sense. It is plain from what follows that it must have contained the name of a fortress; and this guarantees the reading of **Kir-hareseth** as a proper name, though the Massoretes can hardly have understood it so, any more than did the LXX and Vulg. Kir-hareseth (Isa. xvi. 7, 11 = 'Kir of Moab,' xv. 1) is identified with the modern *Kerak*, occupying an impregnable site on the north side of the Wadi of the same name, about twelve miles north of the *Wadi el-Ahsā*. For the rest, the sentence may have been something like this: 'until there was not left but [. . .] of her [Moab's] men in Kir-hareseth.'

26. unto the king of Edom, who was probably an unwilling partner in the alliance.

27. The deity to whom the tribute of human blood was paid was necessarily the national god of Moab, Chemosh. Cf. Moabite Stone, ll. 11, 12: 'And I put to death all the people of the town—*a pleasing spectacle for Chemosh*.' The meaning of the words **there was great wrath against Israel** is obscure. The wrath is presumably that of Chemosh, whose existence and power within his own territory were not doubted by the Israelites (see Judges xi. 24); but in what way it took effect we are not told. Possibly the sickening and paralysing horror of the spectacle was itself attributed to a supernatural influence, just as the Greeks

4 [Es] Now there cried a certain woman of the wives
of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy
servant my husband is dead: and thou knowest that thy
servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to
2 take unto him my two children to be bondmen. And
Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me;
what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine hand-
maid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil.
3 Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy
4 neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And
thou shalt go in, and shut the door upon thee and upon thy
sons, and pour out into all those vessels; and thou shalt

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believed panic to be inspired by the god Pan. At all events, the Israelites had to withdraw from the country.

iv. 1—vi. 23. *Passages in the Life of Elisha.*

Although the bulk of the Elisha-narratives are inserted at this point, it is not to be supposed that all the events recorded took place within the reign of Jehoram. The greater part of Elisha's career fell under the dynasty of Jehu; and the friendly terms on which the prophet sometimes stands with the 'king of Israel' (always unnamed) are more intelligible of a monarch of that house than of a son of Ahab (cf. iii. 13). The question, however, has not much importance except with regard to the setting of vi. 24 ff., and need not be discussed till we come to that section.

iv. 1–7. *The Multiplication of the Widow's store of Oil.* The widow of one of the prophets, whose two sons are about to be seized as slaves by a creditor, appeals to Elisha. Following his directions, she borrows a large number of vessels, and commences to fill them with the oil in her household flask, finding it miraculously increased in the process, so that at last she has enough to pay off the debt and something over to maintain her family. The language shows a slight trace of local dialect, such as is found elsewhere in the Elisha-stories. The resemblance of the miracle to 1 Kings xvii. 8 ff. should be noted.

1. The creditor was within his rights in claiming the children of the debtor as bondservants: cf. Isa. l. 1; Exod. xxi. 7; Neh. v. 5.

2. oil (i. e. olive oil), used for a variety of domestic purposes, was almost a necessity of life among the Hebrews, and, was besides, an important article of commerce (verse 7).

set aside that which is full. So she went from him, and 5
shut the door upon her and upon her sons; they brought
the vessels to her, and she poured out. And it came to 6
pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her
son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her,
There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then 7
she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go,
sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy sons
of the rest.

And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, 8
where was a great woman; and she constrained him to
eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by,
he turned in thither to eat bread. And she said unto 9
her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an
holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let 10
us make, I pray thee, a little chamber on the wall; and

iv. 8–37. *The Lady of Shunem and her Son.* On his frequent journeys through Shunem Elisha is entertained by a wealthy lady, who at length persuades her husband to build a guest-chamber on the roof of their house for his accommodation. As a reward for her hospitality Elisha promises that a son shall be born to her in the following year. In course of time the child grows up, and one day is seized by sunstroke in the harvest-field, and dies the same day. In her distress the mother seeks out the man of God at mount Carmel, and at his feet pours out all the bitterness of her soul. Elisha first sends his staff with his servant Gehazi to lay on the face of the child; but when this proves unavailing he comes himself and restores the dead child to life. The beautiful story is a parallel to 1 Kings xvii. 17 ff.; and illustrates the blessings that are the reward of reverence for a holy prophet of God. At the same time it is of great interest for the light it throws on many details of social life in ancient Israel.

8. Shunem. See on 1 Kings i. 3.

as oft as he passed by: on his journeys between Gilgal (ii. 1, iv. 38) and Carmel (verse 25).

9. an holy man of God. On 'man of God' as a designation of the prophet, see p. 190. The adjective 'holy' does not in this connexion connote saintliness of character, but the formal sanctity which belongs to the prophet in virtue of his relation to God.

10. little chamber with walls (see marg.): as distinguished

let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool,
and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to
11 us, that he shall turn in thither. And it fell on a day,
that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber
12 and lay there. And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call
this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she
13 stood before him. And he said unto him, Say now unto
her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this
care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be
spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?
And she answered, I dwell among mine own people.
14 And he said, What then is to be done for her? And
Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no son, and her husband
15 is old. And he said, Call her. And when he had called
16 her, she stood in the door. And he said, At this season,
when the time cometh round, thou shalt embrace a son.
And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie
17 unto thine handmaid. And the woman conceived, and
bare a son at that season, when the time came round,

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from a mere temporary erection on the roof for the reception of a chance visitor or some other casual purpose. Cf. 1 Sam. ix. 25 (R. V. marg.); 2 Sam. xvi. 22; Neh. viii. 16: see further on i. 2; 1 Kings xvii. 19. The furniture deemed suitable for a guest-chamber in those days consisted of a bed, a table, a stool, and a lamp.

13. thou hast been careful: a peculiar expression, *lit.* 'hast trembled'; hast been anxiously solicitous.

I dwell among mine own people: i. e. my own kindred. As a 'great lady' she was surrounded by relatives powerful enough to protect her interests, and had no need that influence should be used for her with the king or the captain of the host. A day was to come when it was far otherwise (viii. 1-6).

16. when the time reviveth (marg.): a difficult phrase, found elsewhere only in Gen. xviii. 10, 14 (J). Usually it is explained 'when this time lives again' = 'this time next year.' Ewald more plausibly takes it to mean 'next spring,' the season when the year renews its life. Neither interpretation seems quite satisfactory.

do not lie: create delusive expectations (cf. Hab. ii. 3).

as Elisha had said unto her. And when the child was 18
grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to
the reapers. And he said unto his father, My head, my 19
head. And he said to his servant, Carry him to his
mother. And when he had taken him, and brought him 20
to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then
died. And she went up, and laid him on the bed of 21
the man of God, and shut *the door* upon him, and went
out. And she called unto her husband, and said, Send 22
me, I pray thee, one of the servants, and one of the
asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again.
And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it 23
is neither new moon nor sabbath. And she said, It shall
be well. Then she saddled an ass, and said to her 24
servant, Drive, and go forward; slacken me not the
riding, except I bid thee. So she went, and came unto 25
the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass,
when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to
Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is the Shunammite:
run, I pray thee, now to meet her, and say unto her, Is 26
it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well
with the child? And she answered, It is well. And 27
when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught

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19 f. Cf. Judith viii. 3: 'he stood over them that bound sheaves in the field, and the heat came upon his head, and he took to his bed and died.'

21. Cf. 1 Kings xvii. 19.

23. The husband's answer implies that it was the ancient custom to make somewhat lengthy pilgrimages to prophets and sacred places at the new moons and on the sabbaths. The distance from Shunem to Carmel would be twenty or twenty-five miles; much longer, therefore, than the sabbath day's journey of later Judaism.

26. It is well: or simply, 'Yes!' (the affirmative answer in Hebrew is expressed by repeating part of the question). The spirit of the answer is hardly pious resignation, but rather reluctance to lay bare her trouble to any but the man of God himself.

hold of his feet. And Gehazi came near to thrust her
away; but the man of God said, Let her alone: for her
soul is vexed within her; and the LORD hath hid it from
28 me, and hath not told me. Then she said, Did I desire
a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?
29 Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my
staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any
man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him
not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child.
30 And the mother of the child said, As the LORD liveth,
and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he
31 arose, and followed her. And Gehazi passed on before
them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but
there was neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he
returned to meet him, and told him, saying, The child
32 is not awaked. And when Elisha was come into the
house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his
33 bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon
34 them twain, and prayed unto the LORD. And he went
up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his
mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon

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28. And even before him she disguises it in reproaches, through which, however, the prophet perceives the cause of her sorrow, although the Lord had not revealed it to him (verse 27).

29. salute him not: cf. Luke x. 4. In both cases the object of the injunction is to avoid the waste of time involved in the formal and tedious salutations customary in the East. Elisha's first thought seems to have been that the child was not really dead; hence he sends his wonder-working staff by the hands of his servant, 'as if to prevent any more life from issuing from the deceased' (Ewald); but

30. the mother, who knew better, insisted that he should himself accompany her.

31. neither voice, nor hearing: a curious coincidence with 1 Kings xviii. 26.

his hands: and he stretched himself upon him; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and 35
walked in the house once to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called 36
Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, 37
and bowed herself to the ground; and she took up her son, and went out.

And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was 38
a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, 39
and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds

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34. stretched himself upon him: 'crouched over him,' the same verb as 1 Kings xviii. 42.

35. The words **and the child sneezed** are wanting in LXX (B), which thus, more naturally, connects the 'seven times' with the action of the prophet.

iv. 38–41. *Death in the Pot.* At Gilgal, in a time of dearth, when Elisha had called together the sons of the prophets to a common meal, some unwholesome wild fruit was thrown into the pot by mistake; whereupon the prophet rendered the dish innocuous by casting in a little salt.

38. The prophetic community at Gilgal (see on ii. 1) seems to have led a coenobitic life, inhabiting a sort of monastery (vi. 1), and eating at a common table. That Elisha himself dwelt among them is perhaps not necessarily implied; and in v. 9 he has a private house of his own. The state of matters presupposed by iv. 1 ff. appears to be entirely different.

For **a dearth** the Hebrew has 'the dearth,' doubtless the seven years' famine predicted in viii. 1, and frequently referred to in the Elisha-stories.

39. a wild vine . . . wild gourds: *lit.* 'vine of the field . . . gourds of the field.' The plant was probably the colocynth (so Vulg.), which might be called a vine on account of its trailing

his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pot-
40 tage: for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat
41 thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot.
42 And there came a man from Baal-shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and fresh ears of corn in his sack. And he said,
43 Give unto the people, that they may eat. And his servant said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? But he said, Give the people, that they may eat; for thus saith the LORD, They shall eat, and shall leave
44 thereof. So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the LORD.

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tendrils, and whose fruit might be mistaken for the globe cucumber. It is described as 'a drastic cathartic and, in quantities, an irritant poison.'

41. Pour out. The command is addressed to the servant, whom the LXX here names as Gehazi.

iv. 42–44. *The Miraculous Feeding of a hundred Prophets.* A small offering of first-fruits brought to the man of God from Baal-shalishah is so multiplied as to appease the hunger of a hundred men and leave something over. The 'men' are not expressly said to be prophets; but the close connexion of the incident with the preceding leaves little doubt that that is the meaning. The practice of offering first-fruits to a man of God is nowhere else referred to: see on v. 23.

42. It is said in the Talmud that nowhere did the fruits of the earth ripen so quickly as at **Baal-shalishah.** The place is identified by Conder with *Khirbet Kefr Thilth*, about fourteen miles north-west from Jiljilia.

fresh ears of corn: better, (freshly plucked) 'garden growth'; cf. Lev. ii. 14, xxiii. 14.

sack: or, 'wallet.' The Hebrew word is doubtful, and the text somewhat uncertain.

Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, 5
was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given victory unto Syria: he was also a mighty man of valour, *but he was* a leper.
And the Syrians had gone out in bands, and had brought 2
away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her 3
mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! then would he recover him of his leprosy.
And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and 4
thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel. And the 5
king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with

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v. 1–19. *The Healing of Naaman the Syrian.* Naaman, a successful Syrian general, who was a leper, hears through a Hebrew slave-girl of the wonder-working power of the great prophet of Israel; and is sent by his master to Samaria to be healed. The king of Israel is alarmed by the peremptory demand of the Syrian monarch; but Elisha interposes, and when the great man comes to his door bids him wash seven times in the Jordan. Naaman at first proudly refuses; but afterwards yields to the remonstrances of his servants, and is cured. He then returns to confess his faith in the God of Elisha as the only God in all the earth, and to crave permission to take enough soil of the land of Canaan to build an altar to Yahweh. And he hopes that when his official duties require him to pay an outward homage to Rimmon, this will not be misunderstood or hardly judged by the prophet.

1. honourable: *lit.* 'man of respect'; cf. Isa. iii. 3; Job xxii. 8.

The phrase **a mighty man of valour** was probably a marginal gloss to 'great man' above. It is wanting in LXX (L), which reads simply, 'but the man was a leper.' It is an indication of a somewhat advanced theological standpoint that the Syrian victories are ascribed, not to the gods of Syria, but to Yahweh.

2. gone out in bands: i. e. had made forays into Israelitish territory, although diplomatically the two nations were at peace.

4. The fuller text of LXX (L) reads, 'And she [Naaman's wife] went in, and told her lord, and he told the king and said, Thus and thus,' &c.

him ten talents of silver, and six thousand *pieces* of gold,
6 and ten changes of raiment. And he brought the letter
to the king of Israel, saying, And now when this letter is
come unto thee, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant
to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.
7 And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read
the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God,
to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto
me to recover a man of his leprosy? but consider, I pray
8 you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me. And
it was so, when Elisha the man of God heard that the
king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the
king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let
him come now to me, and he shall know that there is
9 a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses
and with his chariots, and stood at the door of the house
10 of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him,
saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh
11 shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. But
Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold,
I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand,
and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his

5. changes of raiment: cf. Judges xiv. 12, 13, 19.

6. And now: a verbal citation of the relevant part of the letter, omitting the conventional introduction.

that thou mayest recover: strictly, 'and thou shalt recover.' The peremptory tone is that of the suzerain to his vassal.

7. Cf. 1 Kings xx. 7.

seeketh a quarrel: 'an opportunity,' i. e. a *casus belli*. The king can only interpret the extraordinary message as a pretext for the renewal of hostilities.

9. Elisha is obviously regarded as residing in Samaria (verse 3), and in his own private house, not in the society of the sons of the prophets (iv. 38).

10. As with the Shunammite (iv. 12ff.), so with this distinguished foreigner, Elisha communicates through a third party; and Naaman resents the indignity.

hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not 12
Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than
all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be
clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. And 13
his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said,
My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great
thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather
then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? Then 14
went he down, and dipped *himself* seven times in Jordan,
according to the saying of the man of God: and his
flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and
he was clean. And he returned to the man of God, he 15
and all his company, and came, and stood before him:
and he said, Behold now, I know that there is no God
in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee,
take a present of thy servant. But he said, As the LORD 16

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12. the rivers of Damascus. The region of Damascus is still watered by two main streams: the larger is the *Nahr Baradā*, rising in Anti-Libanus and flowing eastward through the city, and the smaller the *Nahr el-A'waj*, running nearly parallel, some miles to the south. Both lose themselves in marshes east of the city. The first is identified with **Abana** (pronounced by the Massoretes *Amana*), and the second with **Pharpar.** The latter name seems still to be preserved in *Wadi Barbar*, whose waters do not *now* join the *A'waj*, and which is too small to be mentioned by itself as the second great river of Damascus.

13. The solicitude of the servants for their master's welfare is creditable to both; but it is doubtful if the address **My father** can have been the real text. It seems to be a corruption of the word for 'if,' which is otherwise not expressed in the original, and is indispensable. LXX (L) has both words; LXX (B) has neither, thus turning the hypothetical into an absolute sentence which makes nonsense.

15. that there is no God . . . : cf. Isa. xlv. 14. The monotheistic confession in the mouth of a heathen of that age is surprising, especially in view of the narrower conception implied in verse 17.

'Blessing,' used in the sense of 'present,' as Judges i. 15; 1 Sam. xxx. 26.

liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And
17 he urged him to take it; but he refused. And Naaman
said, If not, yet I pray thee let there be given to thy
servant two mules' burden of earth; for thy servant will
henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto
18 other gods, but unto the LORD. In this thing the LORD
pardon thy servant; when my master goeth into the
house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on
my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon,
when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD
19 pardon thy servant in this thing. And he said unto him,
Go in peace. So he departed from him a little way.
20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God,

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16. before whom I stand: cf. 1 Kings xvii. 1.

17. Though Yahweh has revealed Himself to the conscience of Naaman as the only genuine God, yet He can properly be worshipped only on Israelitish soil. The idea was universal; and so doubtless was this particular way of giving effect to it.

18. Rimmon, or *Rammân*, a thunder-god of the Assyrians, is identified with Hadad in the inscriptions, with the interesting notice that the latter was the name by which the god was known *in the West* (Zimmern, in *KAT*^{3}, p. 443).

worship and **bow myself** stand for the same Hebrew verb, which should be rendered 'bow' throughout. Naaman means that he will render to Rimmon, the state deity, the perfunctory homage which his position demanded, but that his heart will remain loyal to Yahweh. Such a case of conscience would no doubt require to be treated differently on the plane of Christian morality, where fidelity to one's inmost convictions is of vital importance.

19. a little way: *lit.* 'a region of land,' as Gen. xxxv. 16, xlviii. 7. The exact sense is unknown: some take it to mean 'as far as one can see.' (Cf. Burney, p. 281.)

v. 20-27. *The Curse on Gehazi.* The sight of Naaman's wealth had excited the cupidity of Gehazi, and he resolves to secure a portion of it for himself. By a cleverly concocted story he easily moves the generous Syrian to give him double the very large sum of money he had ventured to ask. But on re-entering his master's presence he finds that even his secret purposes are discerned, and that no evasion can screen him from the doom he

said, Behold, my master hath spared this Naaman the Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him. So Gehazi followed after Naa- 21
man. And when Naaman saw one running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well? And he said, All is well. My master hath 22
sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from the hill country of Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets; give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of raiment. And Naaman said, 23
Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of raiment, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him. And when he came to the 24
hill, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed. But he went in, and stood before his master. And 25
Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. And he 26
said unto him, Went not mine heart *with thee*, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it

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has deserved. Under the prophet's withering rebuke the leprosy which is to cleave to his seed for ever breaks out upon him.

21. So great is the honour due to a prophet that even before his servant Naaman must **light down** from his chariot.

For **one,** read 'him' (LXX).

23. two of his servants: or, 'his (Gehazi's) two servants.' Gehazi had apparently taken two men with him; possibly he had represented them as the two young men for whom he begged (Benzinger).

24. the hill, or 'mound'; Heb. '*Ophel*, a name applied elsewhere in O. T. only to the south-east spur of the temple mount at Jerusalem. (But cf. Moabite Stone, l. 22.)

26. when the man: better, 'when some one.'

Is it a time? If the text were correct the sense would be

a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and men-
27 servants and maidservants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper *as white* as snow.

6 And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell before thee is too strait
2 for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye.
3 And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy
4 servants. And he answered, I will go. So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down
5 wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axe-head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, my master!
6 for it was borrowed. And the man of God said, Where

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that a time of national distress and mourning was no fit time for amassing the means of private luxury. But the LXX, by a very small change, yields an easier and better reading: 'And now thou hast received the money, and thou shalt receive garments . . . (27) and the leprosy of Naaman,' &c.; as if with the gift he had received the leprosy of the giver.

vi. 1–7. *The Axe-head made to swim.* The company of prophets (at Gilgal?) had so increased in numbers that they found it necessary to establish a new settlement in the valley of the Jordan. As they were felling wood for this purpose one of them lost the head of an axe (which he had borrowed) in the river. Elisha, on being appealed to, threw a stick into the water, when the iron floated to the surface. The conception of the life of a prophetic community is similar to that of iv. 38-41, 42-44. The prophets live together; Elisha lives amongst them and orders all their common affairs; and so closely paternal is his relation to them that they cannot bear to be separated from him, even while engaged in the most mundane employment.

2. The Jordan valley is chosen as the site of the new settlement, probably because of the abundant supply of building timber which could there be found.

fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither, and made the iron to swim. And he said, Take it up to thee. So he put out his hand, and took it. 7

Now the king of Syria warred against Israel; and he took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp. And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are coming down. And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of; and he saved himself there, not once nor twice. And the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel? And one of his 8 9 10 11 12

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6. It is surprising to find Ewald rationalizing the incident by the comment that 'he threw on to the spot where it had sunk a piece of wood cut to fit it, which caught it up'!

vi. 8–23. *The Syrians entrapped.* In an irregular campaign against Israel the king of Syria finds his confidential plans so often anticipated by the enemy that he is led to suspect treachery amongst his own officers. He learns, however, that his real antagonist is Elisha, whose supernatural knowledge was placed at the disposal of the king of Israel. On discovering that the prophet was in Dothan he sends a large force to surround the city by night and take him prisoner; knowing nothing of the greater host, invisible to mortal eyes—horses and chariots of fire—that protected Elisha. In the morning the Syrians are struck blind at Elisha's prayer, and are led by him into the heart of Samaria, where their eyes are opened. The prophet directs the king to provide them with bread and water: as a consequence, the marauding expeditions of the Syrians against Israel are discontinued.

8. shall be my camp, or (changing the text) 'let us set an ambush.'

9. coming down: a very unusual (Aramaic) form: it should probably be altered to 'concealed.'

11. which of us is for. LXX reads, 'who has betrayed me to.'

servants said, Nay, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the
13 words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber. And he said, Go and see where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in
14 Dothan. Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and com-
15 passed the city about. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host with horses and chariots was round about the city. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall
16 we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be
17 with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about
18 Elisha. And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with
19 blindness according to the word of Elisha. And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the

Possibly the original text combined both words: 'which of us is betraying me to' the king of Israel? (Kittel).

13. Dothan (*Tell Dōthān*) was ten miles north of Samaria, in a small plain through which passed the great caravan-road from Damascus to Egypt. (Cf. Gen. xxxvii. 17.)

15. The Hebrew shows signs of confusion in the beginning of the verse. The original text must have read somewhat after Klostermann's ingenious emendation (partly supported by LXX (L)): 'And he [Elisha] rose early the following day in the morning and went out,' &c. The **servant** is only introduced in the next sentence.

17. the young man: 'the servant,' as in verse 15.

horses and chariots of fire. See on ii. 11.

18. they came down: i. e. from the hills surrounding the plain.

city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom
ye seek. And he led them to Samaria. And it came to 20
pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said,
LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see.
And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and,
behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. And the 21
king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, My
father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them? And he 22
answered, Thou shalt not smite them: wouldest thou
smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword
and with thy bow? set bread and water before them,
that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.
And he prepared great provision for them: and when 23
they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they
went to their master. And the bands of Syria came no
more into the land of Israel.

[N] And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad 24

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21. My father: cf. xiii. 14. The title shows that friendly relations existed between the prophet and this (unnamed) king of Israel.

22. whom thou hast taken. LXX (L) inserts a 'not' before the verb, which is doubtless the correct reading. The Hebrew text is intelligible only on the assumption that it was not the Hebrew custom to slay prisoners of war, an assumption negatived by the king's impulse to fall on these defenceless men.

23. prepared great provision, or, 'made a great feast.' But the terms occur nowhere else, and the text is uncertain.

vi. 24—vii. 20. *Elisha during the Siege.*

This section occupies an ambiguous and disputed position among the Elisha-narratives, closely analogous to that of iii. 4 ff. On the one hand, the prophet is so obviously the central personage of the story that it might be supposed to have been written as a chapter of his biography. But, on the other hand, the political background is so much more definite than in any other of the Elisha-stories as to raise the question whether the passage should not rather be assigned to a document of the same character as 1 Kings xx, xxii. The latter view is maintained by Wellhausen (followed by Driver,

king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and
25 besieged Samaria. And there was a great famine in
Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's
head was sold for fourscore *pieces* of silver, and the fourth

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&c.), who points out some strong resemblances to the style of chaps. xx, xxii (vi. 24, vii. 9, 12: namelessness of the king, &c.). Others, again, explain these as due to imitation of the older document, and think that we have here to do with an Elisha-narrative pure and simple (Benzinger, Kittel; also Kuenen). Possibly, as in the case of ch. iii, a more complex hypothesis may be necessary: a chapter of a political history may have been utilized as the basis of a prophetic biography (see above, p. 282 f.).

Whether the siege occurred in the time of Jehoram or under the reign of some later king can hardly be determined. It has been already pointed out (p. 290) that the position of the section affords no presumption that Jehoram is the king referred to; and the Ben-hadad of vi. 24 need not be the contemporary of Ahab, but may be the son of Hazael who is said to have oppressed Israel 'continually' in the days of Jehoahaz the son of Jehu (xiii. 3). Kuenen's conjecture that the king is Jehoahaz is plausible enough on the general ground that in that reign Israel appears to have touched the lowest depth of humiliation under the Syrians; but the specific arguments adduced in favour of that opinion break down under close examination (see the notes on vi. 31, 32).

vi. 24–31. *On the Wall of Samaria.* It was apparently during the great famine (viii. 1) that the Syrians invaded Israel and laid siege to Samaria. The horrible plight to which the inhabitants were reduced is indicated by the price at which the meanest articles of diet were sold, and vividly illustrated by the case of two poor women who had agreed together to kill their children for food. Horrified by this revelation of wretchedness, the king swears that he will take the life of Elisha the prophet, whom for some unexplained reason he holds responsible for these intolerable sufferings.

24. The phraseology of the verse is modelled on that of 1 Kings xx. 1.

after this cannot refer to the immediately preceding narrative (see verse 23); the passage must have stood originally in a different connexion.

Ben-hadad. See on 1 Kings xx. 1, 2 Kings xiii. 3.

25. an ass's head: a worthless part of an animal whose flesh was ordinarily not eaten at all sold for eighty silver shekels (but LXX reads fifty shekels),

part of a kab of dove's dung for five *pieces* of silver.
And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, 26
there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O
king. And he said, If the LORD do not help thee, 27
whence shall I help thee? out of the threshing-floor, or
out of the winepress? And the king said unto her, What 28
aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto
me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to-day, and we
will eat my son to-morrow. So we boiled my son, and 29
did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give
thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.
And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of 30
the woman, that he rent his clothes; (now he was passing
by upon the wall;) and the people looked, and, behold,

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dove's dung is the literal rendering of the Hebrew phrase, which is supported by all the versions, though in the synagogue reading a less offensive term was substituted. Some scholars have tried hard to find an edible plant which might be called by this name; others have recourse to emendation of the text. The most felicitous conjecture is perhaps that of Cheyne, *carob-pods*[1], which he describes as 'a poor but not innutritious substitute' for bread.

The **kab**, a measure of capacity not elsewhere mentioned in the O. T., is known from later authorities to have been one-eighteenth of an ephah. The fourth part of a kab would be less than a pint.

27. If the LORD. The marginal rendering is perhaps preferable: 'Nay, let Yahweh help thee!'

out of the threshing-floor . . .?—bitter irony.

28. The woman represents the evil suggestion as having come from the neighbour who had afterwards played her false by concealing her own child.

30. Realizing the full horror of the tale, the king **rent his clothes**, revealing to the spectators the **sackcloth**, the garb of mourning, worn in secret beneath his robes. There is in this graphic touch an unmistakable sympathy and admiration on the part of the writer towards the king. For **passing by**, it is better to read with LXX (L) 'standing.'

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[1] חֲרוֹנִים *for* חֲרֹבִים.

31 he had sackcloth within upon his flesh. Then he said,
God do so to me, and more also, if the head of Elisha
32 the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day. But
Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; and
the king sent a man from before him: but ere the
messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye
how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine
head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door,
and hold the door fast against him: is not the sound of
33 his master's feet behind him? And while he yet talked

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31. Elisha was in some sense the author of the calamities that had befallen the city. The most natural explanation would be that the prophet had inspired the heroic resistance which king and people had offered to the enemy. Benzinger's objection—that if that were all the king had the remedy in his own hands, and could at any moment surrender to the Syrians—seems to miss the point. Verse 33 suggests the answer: the king blamed Elisha for holding out delusive hopes of deliverance by Yahweh's might, and his sudden threat of vengeance on the prophet may have been due to exasperation at the failure of these promises. The verse, therefore, gives no real support to the opinion that behind the siege there was a drought, which Elisha had brought on the land as a punishment for its idolatries.

vi. 32—vii. 2. *In the House of Elisha.* Meanwhile Elisha is seated in his house with the elders of the city, when he receives a supernatural intimation of the king's intention to kill him. He has barely time to warn the elders of the approach of the messenger, when the king himself enters, and passionately renounces his faith in the word of Yahweh. Elisha replies calmly with a prediction of abundant food at the gate of Samaria on the following day: and he adds an ominous warning to an incredulous courtier, who had laughed his prophecy to scorn.

32. the elders sat with him: cf. Ezek. viii. 1, xx. 1; the object of the visit being to 'inquire of the Lord' through him.

32^{b}, 33 give a somewhat confused account of the proceedings. Since the speaker in the end of verse 33 is certainly the king, it seems necessary to suppose that in that verse at least the word *mal'āk* (= 'messenger') is a mistake for *melek* ('king'). But then we observe that Elisha is still speaking with the elders when the king appears, and there is no hint of their conference having been interrupted by the arrival of any messenger. The 'messenger,'

with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him:
and he said, Behold, this evil is of the LORD; why
should I wait for the LORD any longer? And Elisha said, 7
Hear ye the word of the LORD: thus saith the LORD,
To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour
be *sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for
a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. Then the captain on 2
whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God,
and said, Behold, if the LORD should make windows in
heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou
shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

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in fact, is a quite superfluous personage; and Wellhausen is probably right in thinking that the whole of the clauses relating to him are embellishments interpolated by a scribe who understood the verb 'sent' much too literally (it can be used in the sense of 'give directions,' see 1 Kings v. 9). The simplified text would read: 'And before the *king* came to him, he had said to the elders, See ye that this son of a murderer has given orders to cut off my head? While he was yet talking with them, the king came down to him, and said,' &c. It is less probable, though possible, that the text errs by defect, a description of the arrival of the messenger having been omitted between verses 32 and 33.

The expression **son of a murderer** means no more than 'murderer'; and implies no real reflection on the father of the person spoken of. It is therefore idle to discuss whether it be more applicable to a son of Ahab or a son of Jehu. The prophet has nothing in his mind beyond the murderous design which he is unmasking.

33. Behold, this evil . . .: cf. Amos iii. 6, 'Shall there be evil in a city, and Yahweh hath not done it?'

why should I wait? The words express despondency rather than vindictiveness; the king is overawed in the presence of the prophet, and lacks the courage to carry out his threat.

vii. **1.** A 'seah' (marg.) is the third part of an ephah, or about one and a half pecks. Reliable data as to the ordinary price of grain in ancient Israel cannot be found; but there is no doubt that the prices specified are still abnormally high.

2. the captain: or 'adjutant' (*shālīsh*, see on 1 Kings ix. 22).

on whose hand: cf. the case of Naaman, v. 18.

windows in heaven: cf. Gen. vii. 11, viii. 2; Mal. iii. 10.

3 Now there were four leprous men at the entering in of
the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here
4 until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then
the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if
we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and
let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us
alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.
5 And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of
the Syrians: and when they were come to the outermost
part of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no
6 man there. For the Lord had made the host of the
Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses,
even the noise of a great host: and they said one to
another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the
kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to

vii. 3-20. *Outside the Gate.* On that very evening four starving lepers from the gate went into the enemy's camp to surrender themselves and found it utterly deserted. Deceived by some mysterious sound in the air the Syrians had taken to sudden flight, thinking that a mighty host was advancing from the north to the relief of the city. The king, on hearing the report of the lepers, at first suspected a stratagem, and sent out couriers to follow the track of the fugitives. When all anxiety had been dispelled, the people rushed out and plundered the deserted camp. Thus on the next day Elisha's prophecy was literally fulfilled; and the incredulous officer who had scoffed at his words was trampled to death in the gate, in sight of the plenty he was not to share.

5. in the twilight: when their movements could not be observed from the city.

6. the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians. For 'the Egyptians' we should probably read *Muṣri* (i. e. Cappadocia), as in 1 Kings x. 28. The centre of the Hittite power was in Northern Syria, between the Euphrates and the Orontes; and it is most natural to suppose that another northern power should be named along with them. That this Northern Muzri was politically in touch with Israel and Syria is proved by the fact that a king of that land fought as an ally of Ahab and Ben-hadad at the battle of Karḳar in 854 (*KAT*^{3}, p. 42; *COT*, p. 196). The improbability of a combination of Hittites and Egyptians for the

come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the 7
twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their
asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.
And when these lepers came to the outermost part of 8
the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and
drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment,
and went and hid it; and they came back, and entered
into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and
hid it. Then they said one to another, We do not well: 9
this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace:
if we tarry till the morning light, punishment will overtake
us: now therefore come, let us go and tell the king's
household. So they came and called unto the porter of 10
the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the
camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man
there, neither voice of man, but the horses tied, and the
asses tied, and the tents as they were. And he called 11
the porters; and they told it to the king's household
within. And the king arose in the night, and said unto 12
his servants, I will now shew you what the Syrians have
done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore
are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the

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relief of Samaria has long been felt; and it was too rashly concluded by several scholars that the notice revealed the ignorance of the narrator, the only possible enemy in the background being the Assyrians. But a confusion between Assyria and Egypt is inconceivable on the part of any Hebrew writer; while, on the other hand, a coalition of Muzri and Hittites against Damascus is well within the bounds of historical probability. It may be doubted, however, if it would be likely to occur so late as the reign of Jehoahaz.

9. and we hold our peace: as 1 Kings xxii. 3.

punishment will overtake us: or, 'guilt will be incurred by us' (Vulg.).

10. Read 'porters' (pl.), as marg. (see verse 11).

11. The **porters** are, of course, the keepers of the *city* gate; hence the rendering of marg. is obviously right.

field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall
13 take them alive, and get into the city. And one of his
servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee,
five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city,
(behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are
left in it; behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel
14 that are consumed:) and let us send and see. They
took therefore two chariots with horses; and the king
sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.
15 And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the
way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians
had cast away in their haste. And the messengers
16 returned, and told the king. And the people went out,
and spoiled the camp of the Syrians. So a measure of
fine flour was *sold* for a shekel, and two measures of
barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD.
17 And the king appointed the captain on whose hand he
leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people
trode upon him in the gate, and he died as the man of
God had said, who spake when the king came down to

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12. take them alive: cf. 1 Kings xx. 18.

13. five is a round number (1 Sam. xxi. 3). The confused text in the latter part of the verse has arisen partly from glosses and partly from duplication (the latter is avoided by the LXX). The clause **which are left in the city** must be omitted as tautological; and the parenthetic sentence must have read originally: '(behold, they are as all the multitude that are consumed)'; i. e. the few remaining horses are rapidly going the way of all the rest, which have perished in the famine.

15. vessels: or 'weapons.'

16. This decisive proof of the precipitate flight of the besiegers allayed the fears of the king; and the people were permitted to plunder the camp at their will.

17 relates how terribly the doom pronounced by Elisha on the flippant courtier was fulfilled. The last part of the verse should probably be amended so as to read: 'according to the word of the man of God which he spake,' &c.

him. And it came to pass, as the man of God had 18
spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a
shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be
to-morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria; and 19
that captain answered the man of God, and said, Now,
behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven,
might such a thing be? and he said, Behold, thou shalt
see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof: it came 20
to pass even so unto him; for the people trode upon
him in the gate, and he died.

[Es] Now Elisha had spoken unto the woman, whose 8
son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou
and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou
canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine;
and it shall also come upon the land seven years. And 2
the woman arose, and did according to the word of the
man of God: and she went with her household, and
sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.

18–20 are merely an expansion of the words just quoted, and were probably appended to the narrative by a later editor.

viii. 1–15. *Elisha-Narratives resumed.*

viii. 1–6. *The Shunammite in Distress.* The great lady who had so proudly said to Elisha, 'I dwell among mine own people' (iv. 13), is obliged to emigrate to escape the famine, of which she had been forewarned by Elisha. She returns after seven years, to find that her property has been unlawfully appropriated by others. Her petition for redress comes before the king just as Gehazi is recounting to him the marvellous restoration of her dead child to life by the prophet. She is at once recognized by Gehazi; whereupon the king grants her prayer, and appoints an official to look after her interests.

1. sojourn wheresoever ... sojourn: an '*idem per idem* idiom, often employed in the Semitic languages' (Driver, *Deuteronomy*, p. 31).

it shall also come. The Hebrew might mean, 'and it actually came.'

2. the land of the Philistines: cf. Gen. xxvi. 1.

3 And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the
woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and
she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and
4 for her land. Now the king was talking with Gehazi the
servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee,
5 all the great things that Elisha hath done. And it came
to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored
to life him that was dead, that, behold, the woman,
whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for
her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord,
O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom
6 Elisha restored to life. And when the king asked the
woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her
a certain officer, saying, Restore all that was hers, and
all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the
land, even until now.
7 And Elisha came to Damascus; and Ben-hadad the

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4. Gehazi is evidently no leper at this time, or he would not have been admitted to an audience with the king.

5. him that was dead: LXX (B), 'a child that had died.'

6. all the fruits (or, 'produce') **of the field:** a sum equivalent to the annual revenue of the estate for the time it had been alienated.

viii. 7–15. *Elisha and Hazael.* Elisha visits Damascus; and Ben-hadad the king, who was lying sick, sends Hazael (probably his general) to inquire of Yahweh about his prospects of recovery. Elisha sends back word that he would certainly recover; but at the same time he privately tells Hazael that it has been revealed to him that the king is to die. Having said this, his face assumes the rigidity of the prophetic trance, and he bursts into tears. On being asked to explain his emotion, the prophet discloses his prevision of the atrocities which Hazael is to perpetrate on Israel; and when the latter disclaims all pretensions to such eminence, he addresses him plainly as the future king of Syria. Hazael carries back to his master the favourable message of Elisha; but the next day Ben-hadad is secretly murdered, and is succeeded by Hazael. It is not expressly stated that Hazael was the assassin; and a few scholars (Ewald, Winckler) have doubted

king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither. And the king said unto 8
Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go meet the man of God, and inquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this sickness? So Hazael went to meet 9
him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this sickness? And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto 10
him, Thou shalt surely recover; howbeit the LORD hath

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if this be the meaning. But the impression naturally made by the narrative is probably correct.

Hazael (*Ḥaza'ilu*) is twice mentioned, in an inscription of Shalmaneser II, as king of Damascus (842 and 839 B. C.). Of his origin nothing is known except what may be fairly gathered from the passage before us. It is plain that he was not the legitimate heir of the crown, but a usurper and the founder of a new dynasty. It is practically certain that he was a high military officer, probably the commander-in-chief. Singularly enough, no record has been preserved of his having been actually anointed, either by Elijah or by Elisha. (See 1 Kings xix. 15.)

7. Since Hazael reigned contemporaneously with Jehu, there can be no doubt that the incident belongs to the reign of Jehoram, and that **Ben-hadad** is the king who fought unsuccessfully against Ahab (1 Kings xx. 1). The fame of Elisha had reached Damascus (in consequence of the event of ch. v?).

9. The costliness of the gift is not incredible, considering the wealth of the city and the rank of the giver.

10. say unto him, Thou shalt surely recover. There cannot be a doubt that this is the correct sense, although in the Hebrew text the attempt was made (in defiance of grammar) to substitute 'not' for 'to him' (see marg.), in order to clear the prophet from the suspicion of falsehood. It is in fact difficult to evade the conclusion that Elisha utters a misleading oracle. One may distinguish between the natural issue of the sickness, which was all that was in Ben-hadad's mind, and the adventitious cause of death, to which his question had no reference; but practically Ben-hadad was deceived and thrown off his guard, while Hazael received the suggestion which (like the witches' prophecy in Macbeth) ripened into regicide.

11 shewed me that he shall surely die. And he settled his
countenance stedfastly *upon him*, until he was ashamed:
12 and the man of God wept. And Hazael said, Why
weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know
the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel:
their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young
men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash in
pieces their little ones, and rip up their women with
13 child. And Hazael said, But what is thy servant, which
is but a dog, that he should do this great thing? And
Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou
14 shalt be king over Syria. Then he departed from Elisha,
and came to his master; who said to him, What said
Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou
15 shouldest surely recover. And it came to pass on the
morrow, that he took the coverlet, and dipped it in

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11. And he settled . . . ashamed. The sentence is difficult. With a small change of pointing we might translate: 'his face took on a fixed look of unutterable horror.' The words rendered 'till he was ashamed' are common in the sense of 'in the extreme,' &c. (ii. 17). It is a description of the prophet's appearance in the trance, in which there came to him the vision of future woe, a state from which he found relief in a flood of tears.

12 affords another glimpse (cf. iii. 25, xv. 16) of the atrocities of ancient warfare (see also Amos i. 3, 13).

13. thy servant . . . dog: *lit.* 'thy servant the dog'—a self-depreciatory epithet (cf. 2 Sam. ix. 8). This comparison, and the following expression **this great thing,** shows that Hazael's feeling is not horror at the idea of his own future depravity, but simple incredulity of the great honour in store for him.

hath shewed me: *lit.* 'hath made me see thee (in the ecstasy) as king over Syria.'

15. the coverlet. The word (*makbēr*) is not known; since the article was dipped in water, it must have been some kind of cloth, with which the king was suffocated. Ewald, who supposes that Ben-hadad was murdered in his bath by the attendants (and cites many parallel cases in history), renders 'bath-cloth.'

water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

[D] And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab 16
king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah,
Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to
reign. Thirty and two years old was he when he began 17
to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And 18
he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the
house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to
wife: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the

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viii. 16–24. *Jehoram of Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xxi.)

Of these verses, 16–19 and 23, 24 belong to the compiler, while 20–22 are an extract from the chronicles of Judah. It will be observed that at this point the systematic arrangement of the material, which is on the whole so strictly adhered to, is entirely abandoned. In accordance with his ordinary procedure the compiler should have carried on his account of the reign of Jehoram of Israel to its conclusion, and then turned back to those kings of Judah who had begun to reign meanwhile. As a matter of fact, the concluding formula for Jehoram (of Israel) and the introductory formula for Jehu are omitted; and the two contemporary Judaean reigns are introduced before the death of Jehoram. A reason for the irregularity is found in the consideration that it became necessary to record the deaths of a king of Israel and a king of Judah on the same day. There was therefore an advantage in breaking down the barrier of the 'framework' at this point, so as to allow the two separate streams of narrative to coalesce for a moment and converge on a single incident. But whether the arrangement is due to the compiler himself is not so certain. The Lucianic text contains a number of scattered indications which go far to show that there were old MSS. of Kings in which a different order obtained, and in which it is conceivable that the usual chronological scheme was observed. See below on viii. 25–29, ix. 29, x. 28–36.

viii. 16–19. *Introduction.*

16. The names **Joram** and Jehoram are of course identical, and seem to be used indiscriminately. The words **Jehoshaphat . . . Judah** are a transcriber's error, and must be omitted, with LXX, &c.

18. the daughter of Ahab: Athaliah, verse 26, xi. 1. Note the omission of the name of the queen-mother in this reign.

19 LORD. Howbeit the LORD would not destroy Judah,
for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give
20 unto him a lamp for his children alway. [KJ] In his
days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and
21 made a king over themselves. Then Joram passed over
to Zair, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by
night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him
about, and the captains of the chariots: and the people
22 fled to their tents. So Edom revolted from under the
hand of Judah, unto this day. Then did Libnah revolt
23 at the same time. [D] And the rest of the acts of
Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the
24 book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And
Joram slept with his fathers, and was buried with his
fathers in the city of David: and Ahaziah his son
reigned in his stead.

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19. See on 1 Kings xi. 36.

for his children. But the children are *themselves* the lamp. Read 'before him' (Klostermann, &c.).

viii. 20-22. *Revolt of Edom and Libnah.*

20. and made a king. See on 1 Kings xxii. 47: 2 Kings iii. 9.

21 describes an attempt of Jehoram to subdue the rebellion, which ended in a disaster to the army of Judah, though this is made as little of as possible, after the manner of official records. The facts evidently were that the king found himself ambushed by a superior force of Edomites, but succeeded in breaking his way through and saving a part of his army by flight. There must be a lacuna in the verse between **with him** and **he rose up.** The **captains of the chariots** are those of Jehoram's own army, mentioned in the beginning of the verse. A very small change would enable us to read: 'and with him were the captains of the chariots,' which is necessary to obtain an intelligible sentence (Kittel). The place **Zair** is not known.

22 a. unto this day: probably added by the compiler.

22 b. Libnah was an important military position in the lowland plain, not far from Lachish (see on xix. 8). Its site has not been certainly determined. Since it is said to have 'revolted,' it cannot have formed an integral part of the kingdom of Judah, but must have been a Philistine city.

In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of 25
Israel did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah
begin to reign. Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah 26
when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in
Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah the
daughter of Omri king of Israel. And he walked in the 27
way of the house of Ahab, and did that which was evil
in the sight of the LORD, as did the house of Ahab: for
he was the son in law of the house of Ahab. And he 28
went with Joram the son of Ahab to war against Hazael
king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead: and the Syrians wounded

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viii. 25–29. *Ahaziah of Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xxii. 1–9.)

The short reign of this king was unmarked by any incident save the one that led to his death. The narrative is wholly redactional; and, for the reason given in the note on p. 317, it breaks off abruptly, leaving the account of the death to be given in connexion with that of Jehoram. LXX (L) inserts between ch. x and xi a duplicate account of the reign, of which the conclusion (replacing verses 28, 29) is as follows: 'And Ahaziah went to war against Hazael king of Syria. Then Jehu the son of Nimshi conspired against Jehoram son of Ahab king of Israel, and smote him in Jezreel, and he died. And Jehu shot Ahaziah also the king of Judah in the chariot, and he died. And his servants brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in the city of David.' Benzinger takes this to be the original form (and position?) of the section; but it is equally possible that it may be but one of many tentative readjustments of the text. It certainly shows that the treatment of this complicated portion of the history was a source of great embarrassment to many editors.

25. For **twelfth** LXX (L) reads 'eleventh': cf. ix. 29. It is an instructive example of the difference between the two systems of reckoning in use. In the usual system of the Hebrew part of a year is counted as a year: hence to have said that Ahaziah began to reign in the eleventh year of Jehoram would have implied that he reigned *two* years; and conversely, since he was known to have reigned but one year, his accession must be assigned to the last (twelfth) year of Jehoram.

26. daughter: here in the sense of 'granddaughter' (marg.). The mention of Omri is an additional tribute to the fame of that monarch: see p. 218.

28, 29. See the introductory note above. The expression

29 Joram. And king Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

9 [N] And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of

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went down (from Jerusalem) would seem to imply that Ahaziah was *not* at the seat of war (so ix. 16).

ix, x. *The Great Revolution.*

The opposition of the prophets to the religious policy of the house of Omri, which had been initiated by the work of Elijah, broke out at last in the tragic events recorded in these two chapters. Elisha, inheriting the ideas of his master, had waited long for an opportunity to translate them into effective action ; but at last he deemed that the time was come to carry out his purpose by a military revolution. The instrument he selected for this purpose was Jehu the son of Nimshi, a dashing and popular officer of the army, in whom private ambition went hand in hand with some degree of sympathy with the aims of the prophetic party. Having received the signal for action, Jehu executed the task assigned to him with the impetuosity and ruthlessness that were characteristic of him, giving himself no rest till he had extirpated the reigning house, massacred the declared devotees of Baal, and seated himself on the throne as the founder of a new dynasty.

The narrative rises at times to a height of descriptive power which is unsurpassed in the pages of the O. T. Although doubts have been expressed as to the complete literary unity of the passage, they have scarcely sufficient weight to demand consideration here. The hand of the Deuteronomic compiler is manifest in ix. 7–10, x. 28–36 ; and there may be some insertions caused by the omission of earlier portions of the document (e. g. ix. 14, 15). But that in the main the passage is taken from an ancient and contemporary source is certain ; and the literary evidence goes to prove that it was written by the same author as 1 Kings xx, xxii (see ix. 2, 23, x. 14, &c.). The objection that a writer whose appreciation of the character of Ahab appears so clearly in ch. xx, xxii could not have written so dispassionately in ch. ix of the destruction of his house has little force. The suppression of the author's personal judgement is a feature of the record ; and it would not be easy to discover whether his own sympathies

the prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this vial of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead. And when thou comest thither, look out there 2
Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber. Then take the vial of 3
oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not. So the young 4
man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead. And when he came, behold, the captains of the 5
host were sitting; and he said, I have an errand to thee,

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went with the successful usurper whose career he chronicles, or whether he shared the widespread horror of Jehu's crimes which breaks forth even from the pages of Hosea (i. 4). His real feeling is perhaps a sense of the tragedy in the history of the powerful dynasty which had measured its human strength against the deepest spiritual forces of the age and been swept away before them.

ix. 1–13. *The Anointing of Jehu.* Elisha sends one of his disciples to Ramoth-gilead to anoint Jehu king of Israel. The fortress was then held against the Syrians by the Israelitish army, in which Jehu was a superior officer; while Jehoram had retired from the front because of wounds received in battle. The young prophet executed his commission with the celerity and secrecy which the occasion demanded, and vanished as suddenly as he came. Jehu is at first rallied by his brother officers on the strange appearance of his visitor; but when he divulges to them the serious import of the interview they at once declare themselves in his favour, and proclaim him king by acclamation.

1. Ramoth-gilead, see 1 Kings xxii. 3. That the city was now in possession of Israel follows from verse 14.

2. Jehu is called simply 'son of Nimshi' in verse 20 and 1 Kings xix. 16. His grandfather was apparently a more important person than his father.

to an inner chamber. See 1 Kings xx. 30, xxii. 25.

3. On the ceremony of anointing, see 1 Kings i. 39.

5. were sitting: probably holding a council of war.

which of all us? The question hardly suggests that Jehu was in chief command.

O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And
6 he said, To thee, O captain. And he arose, and went
into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and
said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel,
I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD,
7 even over Israel. [D] And thou shalt smite the house
of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my
servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants
8 of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole
house of Ahab shall perish: and I will cut off from
Ahab every man child, and him that is shut up and him
9 that is left at large in Israel. And I will make the house
of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat,
10 and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah. And
the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and
there shall be none to bury her. [N] And he opened
11 the door, and fled. Then Jehu came forth to the
servants of his lord: and one said unto him, Is all well?
wherefore came this mad fellow to thee? And he said
unto them, Ye know the man and what his talk was.
12 And they said, It is false; tell us now. And he said,
Thus and thus spake he to me, saying, Thus saith the

7-10[a] are an addition by the compiler (cf. 1 Kings xiv. 10 f., xxi. 20 ff.), and show acquaintance with 1 Kings xvii-xix, as well as xxi. 23.

10[b] in the primary document followed immediately on verse 6.

11. one said: better (as LXX, &c.), 'they said.'

this mad fellow. The lower ecstatic forms of prophecy being scarcely distinguishable from insanity, prophet and lunatic were kindred figures to the ancient mind, which attributed both to possession by a supernatural power. Although it be true that for this reason lunatics are still reverenced in the East, there is undoubtedly a shade of contempt in the choice of this epithet by the officers.

Ye know the man. The meaning appears to be: 'You know the kind of wild talk in which these fellows indulge.'

LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then 13
they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it
under him on the top of the stairs, and blew the trumpet,
saying, Jehu is king. So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat 14
the son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. (Now
Joram kept Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because
of Hazael king of Syria: but king Joram was returned to 15
be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had
given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.)
And Jehu said, If this be your mind, then let none
escape and go forth out of the city, to go to tell it in
Jezreel. So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; 16

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13. took every man . . . under him (i. e. under Jehu): probably a symbol of subjection; cf. Matt. xxi. 8.

the top of the stairs. The word for 'top' (properly *bone*) is not quite intelligible in this connexion (see marg.).

ix. 14–28. *The Murder of Jehoram and Ahaziah.* Jehu, having taken all possible precautions against premature disclosure of his design, mounts his chariot and starts on his long ride to Jezreel. Here, by a most effective transition, the writer suddenly transports us to the point of view of the watchman on the tower of Jezreel, who sees the cavalcade in the distance and reports its approach to the king. Two messengers are dispatched in quick succession to make inquiries, and each in his turn is detained by Jehu and compelled to ride behind him. By this time the watchman has recognized the mad driving of the son of Nimshi; and on learning this Jehoram, now thoroughly alarmed, gets ready his chariot, and drives forth to meet his fate. The chariots meet just by what had once been Naboth's portion; and there after a brief parley Jehoram is shot through the heart from behind by Jehu, who orders his body to be thrown into the field of Naboth, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Elijah. Ahaziah of Judah also, who had accompanied Jehoram, is mortally wounded, but succeeds in reaching Megiddo, where he dies.

14[a] is a recapitulation of the preceding events.

14[b], 15[a] are probably an abridgement of a still earlier part of the document, which had to be introduced here in explanation of what follows.

15[b]. If this be your mind: LXX, 'If your mind be with me'; i. e. 'if you are heartily on my side.'

for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah king of Judah was
17 come down to see Joram. Now the watchman stood on
the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu
as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram
said, Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and let
18 him say, Is it peace? So there went one on horseback to
meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace?
And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn
thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The
messenger came to them, but he cometh not again.
19 Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to
them, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And
Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? turn
20 thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, He
came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the
driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi;
21 for he driveth furiously. And Joram said, Make ready.
And they made ready his chariot. And Joram king of
Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his
chariot, and they went out to meet Jehu, and found him
22 in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite. And it came to
pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace,
Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the

16[b] is again an explanatory parenthesis, accounting for the presence of Ahaziah with Jehoram. See on viii. 29.

17. company: a rare word (- 'abundance'); cf. Isa. lx. 6, Ezek. xxvi. 10. LXX renders, 'dust-cloud.'

18. 'Is all well?' (marg.). The question can hardly be, Do you come with friendly intent? or the king would not afterwards have ridden out unarmed to meet the danger. The source of his anxiety must be apprehension of bad news from the seat of war.

20. furiously: 'like a madman'; from the same root as 'mad fellow' in verse 11.

21. Jehoram, still unsuspicious of immediate danger, orders his chariot to be harnessed, that he might be ready to proceed at once to Ramoth-gilead if necessary.

whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts
are so many? And Joram turned his hands, and fled, 23
and said to Ahaziah, There is treachery, O Ahaziah.
And Jehu drew his bow with his full strength, and smote 24
Joram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his
heart, and he sunk down in his chariot. Then said *Jehu* 25
to Bidkar his captain, Take up, and cast him in the
portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for
remember how that, when I and thou rode together after
Ahab his father, the LORD laid this burden upon him;
Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and 26
the blood of his sons, saith the LORD; and I will requite
thee in this plat, saith the LORD. Now therefore take
and cast him into the plat *of ground*, according to the
word of the LORD. But when Ahaziah the king of 27
Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house.

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22. whoredoms and **witchcrafts**: metaphorical expressions for idolatry.

23. turned his hands: cf. 1 Kings xxii. 34.

24. Render: 'But Jehu had filled his hand with the bow' (see marg.); i. e. had held it ready for action (cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 7).

25. his captain: 'adjutant' (as vii. 2).

for remember: better, as LXX, &c., 'for I remember how I and thou.'

rode together: 'rode in pairs'; but the Hebrew expression is difficult, and the text almost certainly at fault.

burden: or, 'oracle': *lit.* a 'lifting up' (*sc.* of the voice), a term often used of a prophetic utterance: Isa. xiii. 1; Zech. ix. 1; Mal. i. 1; Jer. xxiii. 33 ff., &c.

26. Cf. 1 Kings xxi. 19. The reference is certainly to the same incident; and although there is no material discrepancy between the two accounts, still the difference in the terms of the oracle makes it improbable that the author of either narrative was acquainted with the other. They embody separate traditions, and of these the one here followed is probably closer to the actual facts.

27. the garden house should probably be read as a proper name, *Beth-hag-gan*, which has been plausibly identified with *Engannim* (Joshua xix. 21), now *Jenīn*, on the high road to Jerusalem,

And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot: *and they smote him* at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died
28 there. And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.

29 [Z] And in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.

30 [N] And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel

about seven miles due south of Jezreel. The clause in italics ('and they smote him') must have been accidentally omitted in the Hebrew. LXX, on the other hand, omits the command, reading: 'and he said, Him too! And they smote him,' &c.

Ibleam (or Bileam, 1 Chron. vi. 70) is the modern *Bel'ameh*, a mile further south.

Megiddo (*Lejjūn*, see 1 Kings iv. 12) lies north-west from Jenīn, on another road, at a distance of eleven miles.

ix. 29 breaks the connexion, and its insertion here is difficult to account for. It is the introductory formula of the reign of Ahaziah, but with the chronology characteristic of LXX (L) (see on viii. 25). Now, it so happens that the duplicate which LXX has given at the end of ch. x lacks the introduction; this verse, together with x. 37–43 of that version, would make up a complete account of Ahaziah's reign. It is possible, therefore, that in some early MSS. the complete notice of Ahaziah stood between ix. 28 and 30, following the death of Jehoram of Israel, which (be it observed) would be its proper place *if*, as there is reason to believe (see on i. 17), there existed a chronological system which placed the accession of Jehoram of Judah before that of Jehoram of Israel. Only, the entire omission of the concluding formula of Jehoram's reign would still remain unexplained; and altogether the confusion in LXX is too great to be satisfactorily cleared up.

ix. 30–37. *The End of Jezebel.* Jehu returns to Jezreel, and at the palace gate is hailed by the mocking challenge of Jezebel, who salutes him from an upper window as a second Zimri, a murderer of his master. At his command some eunuchs throw her down to the street, where she is trampled to death by his horses. After banqueting in the palace he gives orders for her burial as a king's daughter; but it was found that Elijah's words

heard of it; and she painted her eyes, and tired her
head, and looked out at the window. And as Jehu 31
entered in at the gate, she said, Is it peace, thou Zimri,
thy master's murderer? And he lifted up his face to the 32
window, and said, Who is on my side? who? And there
looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, 33
Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some
of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the
horses: and he trode her under foot. And when he 34
was come in, he did eat and drink; and he said, See
now to this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a
king's daughter. And they went to bury her: but they 35
found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and
the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again, 36
and told him. And he said, This is the word of the
LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite,
saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall the dogs eat the
flesh of Jezebel: and the carcase of Jezebel shall be as 37

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had received a terribly literal fulfilment, the dogs having already devoured her flesh.

30. painted her eyes: *lit.* 'set her eyes in antimony,' a black powder or paste with which females in the East blacken the edge of the eyelids above and below. The effect is said to be striking in enhancing the brilliancy of the eyes and increasing their apparent size. See Lane, *Modern Egyptians*, p. 29 ff. (Minerva edition).

31. Is it peace? appears here to be no more than the form of salutation. The stinging vocative 'Zimri' carries with it, of course, a covert allusion to the fate of that regicide.

32. Who is on my side? who? The LXX has 'Who art thou? Come down with me'; out of this Klostermann makes, 'Who art thou that thou shouldest contend with me?' But the Massoretic text gives a good sense.

33. For **and he trode** it is better to read the plural, with the ancient versions: 'And they (the horses) trode.'

36. See on 1 Kings xxi. 23.

37. as dung, &c. The word is applied only to corpses, and always in phrases similar to this: Jer. viii. 2, ix. 22, &c., &c.

dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel;
so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.

10 Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu
wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of
Jezreel, even the elders, and unto them that brought up
2 *the sons of* Ahab, saying, And now as soon as this letter
cometh to you, seeing your master's sons are with you,
and there are with you chariots and horses, a fenced city
3 also, and armour; look ye out the best and meetest of
your master's sons, and set him on his father's throne,
4 and fight for your master's house. But they were
exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, the two kings stood

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x. 1–14. *Massacre of the Royal Princes of Israel and Judah.* Following the common practice of usurpers, Jehu takes measures to extirpate the numerous members of the house of Ahab. To the guardians of Jehoram's sons in Samaria he sends an ironical challenge, inviting them to set up one of the princes as king, and let the matter of the sovereignty be fought out on the field of battle. The magnates, however, at once declare their submission; on which Jehu demands the heads of the seventy princes. These were accordingly sent to Jezreel, and exposed in two heaps at the gate of the city. The next day, over this ghastly spectacle, Jehu harangued the people, arguing that while he personally was responsible for the death of the late king, there was clearly a higher power at work, namely, the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah. Having ordered the execution of the remaining adherents of the late dynasty, he then set out for Samaria; but on the way he met a party of Judaean princes who were going to visit their royal relatives: these also he caused to be butchered on the spot.

1. unto the rulers of Jezreel, even. Read, with LXX (L), 'to the rulers of the city and to': the city being Samaria. On the same authority the italicized words 'the sons of' should be restored to the text. The **rulers** are, as usual, the officials; the **elders** are the representatives of the people.

them that brought up: better, 'the guardians of': elsewhere the word means 'foster-father' (Num. xi. 12; Isa. xlix. 23). In the beginning of the verse the word 'sons' must mean descendants: it is implied that in that number were included children of Jehoram (verse 3).

2. The citation from the letter begins precisely as in v. 6.

not before him: how then shall we stand? And he that 5
was over the household, and he that was over the city,
the elders also, and they that brought up *the children*,
sent to Jehu, saying, We are thy servants, and will do all
that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any man king:
do thou that which is good in thine eyes. Then he 6
wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be
on my side, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take
ye the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to
me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time. Now the king's
sons, being seventy persons, were with the great men of
the city, which brought them up. And it came to pass, 7
when the letter came to them, that they took the king's
sons, and slew them, even seventy persons, and put their
heads in baskets, and sent them unto him to Jezreel.
And there came a messenger, and told him, saying, 8
They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And
he said, Lay ye them in two heaps at the entering in of
the gate until the morning. And it came to pass in the 9
morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the
people, Ye be righteous: behold, I conspired against my
master, and slew him: but who smote all these? Know 10
now that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the
word of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning

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6. and come to me: LXX, 'and bring them to me.'

9. Ye be righteous: or, 'innocent.' Jehu realizes that his ferocity has overshot the mark. Instead of being overawed, as he had intended, the people are full of foreboding lest they should be involved in the guilt of so hideous a crime. So, to reassure them, he accepts the responsibility for the murder of Jehoram; but pretends that he and they are alike guiltless of this new atrocity.

10. With some inconsistency he bids them acquiesce in the signal verification of the word spoken by Elijah; cf. 1 Kings xxi. 21.

the house of Ahab: for the LORD hath done that which
11 he spake by his servant Elijah. So Jehu smote all that
remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his
great men, and his familiar friends, and his priests, until
12 he left him none remaining. And he arose and departed,
and went to Samaria. And as he was at the shearing
13 house of the shepherds in the way, Jehu met with the
brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who are
ye? And they answered, We are the brethren of Ahaziah:
and we go down to salute the children of the king and
14 the children of the queen. And he said, Take them
alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the
pit of the shearing house, even two and forty men;
neither left he any of them.

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11. all his great men: better, as LXX (L), 'all his kinsmen' (the same word as 1 Kings xvi. 11; see the note).

12. There is something amiss in the opening of the verse, which strictly reads: 'And he arose and came and went.' The second verb must either be omitted (as LXX), or put last (Pesh.), or altered so as to be the subject of the sentence: 'And *Jehu* arose and went.'

the shearing house of the shepherds: a conjectural and doubtful rendering of a very uncertain phrase. LXX treats it as a proper name: 'Beth-'Eked of the shepherds'; and a place *Beth Kad* has been discovered east of Jenīn, but too far off the road to be identified with the locality here indicated. The Targum translates, 'the meeting house of the shepherds,' a wayside inn or caravanserai frequented by shepherds.

13. we go down is strictly 'we came down,' so that it is doubtful if they were on their way to Jezreel (see below).

14. Take them alive: cf. 1 Kings xx. 18.

the shearing house: or Beth-'Eked: see on verse 12.

Stade has pointed out the improbability that the Judaean princes should still be pursuing their journey northwards in ignorance of the events of the last few days, an improbability enhanced by the fact that the royal princes of Israel were in Samaria, and not in Jezreel. The incident would be more intelligible if they had been intercepted on their way home; and that view is consistent with the terms of the section itself (see on verse 13), though not perhaps with the position in which it now stands.

And when he was departed thence, he lighted on 15
Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and
he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as
my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered,
It is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him
his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot.
And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the 16
LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot. And 17

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x. 15, 16. *Jehu and Jehonadab.* On his way to Samaria Jehu meets with Jehonadab the son of Rechab, who was evidently well known to him by name as an ardent champion of the national faith. After a brief exchange of sentiments he invites him to ride with him in the chariot and witness his zeal for the worship of Yahweh.

From Jer. xxxv we learn that Jehonadab was the 'father' (i. e. the founder) of a religious order called the Rechabites, who observed the rules imposed by him with scrupulous fidelity down to the fall of the kingdom of Judah. The institution of the order, with its vows of abstinence from wine, from agriculture, and from settled dwellings, was clearly meant as a radical protest against the whole system of civilization which the Hebrews had inherited through the conquest of Canaan. That civilization was so permeated by the corrupting influence of Baal-worship, that to men like Jehonadab there appeared no way of preserving the purity of the religion of Yahweh except a return to the primitive simplicity of the nomadic state. The rise of such a movement at this juncture of the history is a sign of the profound and far-reaching issues involved in the conflict between Yahweh and Baal. It shows that others besides Elijah felt that the names Yahweh and Baal stood for two opposite and irreconcileable principles of religion. Jehonadab's extreme and one-sided assertion of that conviction reveals the depth of antagonism which rent the life of the nation in twain; and it explains the eagerness with which he entered into the bloody measures planned by Jehu.

15. The question of Jehu should be read as in LXX: 'Is thy heart honestly with my heart, as my heart is with thy heart?' The answer of Jehonadab consists of the words **It is**; what follows is Jehu's reply to him. The LXX makes this clear: 'And Jehu said, If it be,' &c.

16. For **they made him ride** read 'he made him ride with him.'

when he came to Samaria, he smote all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake to
18 Elijah. And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu
19 shall serve him much. Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshippers, and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice *to do* to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. But Jehu did it in subtilty, to the intent that he
20 might destroy the worshippers of Baal. And Jehu said, Sanctify a solemn assembly for Baal. And they pro-
21 claimed it. And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. And they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was filled from one end

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x. 17–27. *Massacre of the Baal-worshippers.* Arrived in Samaria, Jehu first exterminated the remaining adherents of the house of Ahab. Then, under the pretext of great zeal for the worship of Baal, he planned a treacherous and decisive blow against the devotees of that religion. On an appointed day he assembled in the temple of Baal a huge concourse of prophets, priests and followers of the false religion. After taking steps to ensure that no worshipper of Yahweh was present, he even went so far as to offer sacrifice with his own hand. But at a given signal his guards rushed in and carried out their orders by slaying every one of the worshippers. The emblems of the foreign cult were all destroyed, and the site of the temple was desecrated.

18, 19. It is difficult to explain the success which attended Jehu's somewhat transparent ruse. His victims were perhaps more terrorized than duped; being threatened with death if they absented themselves, they may have deemed it the safer course to disguise their suspicions and hope for the best. The narrative reads more connectedly if (with Klostermann) we delete the words **all his worshippers** in verse 19. Jehu first summons the clergy of the Baal-religion, and then (verse 20) orders them to proclaim the feast to which all the initiated were invited.

20. a solemn assembly: Heb. *'ăṣārāh*. See W. R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*[2], p. 456.

to another. And he said unto him that was over the 22
vestry, Bring forth vestments for all the worshippers of
Baal. And he brought them forth vestments. And 23
Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the
house of Baal; and he said unto the worshippers of Baal,
Search, and look that there be here with you none of the
servants of the LORD, but the worshippers of Baal only.
And they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. 24
Now Jehu had appointed him fourscore men without,
and said, If any of the men whom I bring into your
hands escape, *he that letteth him go*, his life shall be for
the life of him. And it came to pass, as soon as he had 25
made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu
said to the guard and to the captains, Go in, and slay
them; let none come forth. And they smote them with
the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains
cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal.

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22. the vestry. 'As regards the matter of vestments, it was certainly an early and widespread custom to make a difference between the dress of ordinary life and that donned on sacred occasions. But, of course, the great mass of people in a poor society could not keep a special suit for sacred occasions. Such persons would either wash their clothes after as well as before any specially sacred function, or *would have to borrow sacred garments* (ibid. p. 452). 'At Mecca in the times of heathenism, the sacred circuit of the Kaaba was made by the Bedouin either naked or in clothes borrowed from one of the *Ḥoms*, or religious communities of the sacred city' (ibid. p. 451).

24ᵃ. and they went: LXX, 'and he went'; cf. verse 25.

24ᵇ. The awkward construction which is felt even in the English is to be avoided by pointing the chief verb as a causative (*yĕmallēṭ* for *yimmālēṭ*), rendering: 'The man who lets any of those men escape whom I bring to you, his life,' &c.

25. the city of the house of Baal is quite unintelligible, and none of the known meanings of the word for 'city' gives an appropriate sense. Ewald says truly that it 'must mean much the same as the Holy of Holies,' and asserts 'that the image of the heathen god often stood in a lofty and dark enclosure within the temple, resembling a fortress.' It has been proposed to

26 And they brought forth the pillars that were in the house
27 of Baal, and burned them. And they brake down the pillar of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and
28 made it a draught house, unto this day. [D] Thus
29 Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel. Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, *to wit*, the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in
30 Dan. And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast

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change the word to *debir*, the ancient name for the inner shrine of the temple (see on 1 Kings vi. 16). LXX (L) has simply 'the temple of Baal.'

26. the pillars that were in the house of Baal: LXX (L) has 'the pillar of Baal'; but since a pillar (*maṣṣēbāh*) could not be burnt (being of stone), it is perhaps better to read: 'the 'asherah of the house of Baal.' Cf. 1 Kings xvi. 32. 33, where Ahab is said to have erected both an altar and an Asherah in connexion with the worship of Baal.

27. To complete the correspondence with 1 Kings xvi. 32 f. some would here change **pillar** to 'altar.' But there is no evidence of direct dependence of the one passage on the other; and if there were, the assumed error is just as likely to have occurred in the first as in the second.

x. 28-36. *Summary of the Reign of Jehu.* The section is mainly the work of the compiler, although it incorporates an account of Hazael's conquests (verses 32, 33) which we may assign to the annals of the kingdom. In the introduction (verses 28-31) we miss the usual chronological notices at the beginning of a reign. The omission is partly supplied in verse 36, to which the Lucianic version adds the curious synchronism: 'In the second year of Athaliah, the Lord made Jehu the son of Nimshi king.' The obviously erroneous date is got by reckoning (on the LXX system) backwards from xiii. 1; allowing six years for Athaliah and twenty-three for Jehoash on the one side, and twenty-eight for Jehu on the other. We have further to note the absence of the concluding formula of the reign of Jehoram. It is not certain whether these anomalies are due to the compiler himself, or whether, as Benzinger argues, they arose subsequently, in order to bring verse 28 into immediate connexion with the detailed account of Jehu's reformation (see above, p. 317).

28. For **Thus** read simply 'And.'

done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, *and* hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu took no heed 31
to walk in the law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, wherewith he made Israel to sin.

[KI] In those days the LORD began to cut Israel short: 32
and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; from 33
Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the valley of Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan.
[D] Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he 34
did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jehu slept 35
with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead. And the time 36
that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years.

[KJ] Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw 11

32, 33. On Hazael's wars against Israel, see viii. 12, Amos i. 3. This renewed activity on the part of the Syrians coincides with a cessation of the Assyrian attacks on Damascus after 839 B.C. Jehu had already, in 842, put himself under the protection of Shalmaneser II, but Hazael twice offered a successful resistance to the attempt of that monarch to subdue his capital, and was able to direct his whole force against his weaker western neighbour. The first clause of verse 33 should be connected with verse 32: 'all the territory of Israel from Jordan eastward.'

Aroer (now *'Arā'ir*) is situated a little north of the Arnon (*Wadi Mōjib*), and about eleven miles from its mouth at the middle of the east shore of the Dead Sea. The other geographical names are familiar.

xi. *The Revolution in Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xxii. 10—xxiii. 21.)
The centre of interest is now transferred to the kingdom of Judah, whose less eventful history assumes a sudden importance

that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the
2 seed royal. But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram,

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from its belated share in the religious revolution just accomplished in Ephraim. Through the close political and dynastic ties between the two kingdoms the public worship of the Tyrian Baal had been introduced in Jerusalem (xi. 18); and Athaliah, the last survivor of Ahab's house, succeeded for six years in maintaining the family tradition against the better mind of the nation. But the crisis, though deferred, could not be averted; and if its course was somewhat more constitutional than the parallel movement in the north, there lay behind it the same great force—the uprising of national sentiment against the heathenish tendencies of the court. It is instructive to observe that whereas in Israel the chief agitators on behalf of the true religion had been the prophets, in Judah the revolution was directed by the temple priesthood. These external differences, however, do not obscure the fact that the events now to be considered were a phase and outcome of the religious conflict initiated by Elijah.

In chaps. xi, xii the compiler for the first time incorporates lengthy documents in his history of the southern kingdom. These Judaean narratives are commonly supposed to be based on official records; and, as literature, are certainly inferior to the best of the Israelitish sources. Whether in the present passage one or more such documents have been used is not quite clear. In the latter part of ch. xi there are certain incongruities which appear to indicate composite authorship, e. g. the double mention of Athaliah's death, the account of the demolition of the Baal-temple *before* the enthronement of the king, &c. These anomalies are best explained by the theory of Stade, that verses 13–18^{a} are a fragment of a second account which has been inserted in the main narrative (5–12, 18^{b}–20). Similar instances of interwoven narratives in the compiler's sources have already come before us (e. g. 1 Kings xi. 14 ff.); and the probability is that ch. xi here is an extract from the book of the chronicles of Judah.

xi. 1–3. *Athaliah seizes the Throne.* On hearing of the death of Ahaziah, the queen-mother Athaliah (viii. 26) destroyed all the males of the royal house of Judah, and reigned in her own name for six years. Unknown to her, however, Jehoash (Joash), an infant son of the late king, had been saved from the massacre, and was kept in concealment in the temple, under the protection of Jehosheba, a sister of Ahaziah, and her husband Jehoiada the chief priest. The regency of Athaliah is treated by the compiler as a sort of interregnum, and hence is not enclosed by the usual introductory and concluding formulas.

sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons that were slain, even him and his nurse, *and put them* in the bedchamber; and they hid him from Athaliah, so that he was not slain. And he was with her hid in the house of the 3
LORD six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land.

And in the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the 4
captains over hundreds, of the Carites and of the guard,

2. Jehosheba was, as we learn from 2 Chron. xxii. 11, the wife of Jehoiada the priest. The words **even him and his nurse** are probably a gloss (Stade), the sentence having read originally: 'from among the king's sons that were to be slain in the bedchamber' (cf. however, the expression in 2 Chron. xxii. 11).

3. For **with her,** Chronicles has 'with them'; i. e. Jehosheba and her husband.

xi. 4–20. *Proclamation of Joash and Death of Athaliah.* After six years Jehoiada thought that the time had come to overthrow the usurping queen and place the legitimate heir on the throne. He took into his confidence the officers of the palace guard, showing them the young prince, and submitting to them a carefully considered plan of action, which they solemnly pledged themselves to carry out. In accordance with this arrangement the whole of the palace troops were assembled in the temple on a given sabbath; the boy king was crowned with all the customary formalities, and hailed with acclamation by the guards. Athaliah, who on hearing the tumult had hastened to the temple, was by Jehoiada's orders conducted beyond the sacred precincts and put to death. The king and people then renewed their allegiance to Yahweh in a solemn covenant; the temple of Baal was destroyed; and Joash without further disturbance was firmly established on the throne.

Following Stade's analysis of the passage (p. 336 above), we see that the writer of the main account (verses 4–12, 18[b]–20) ignores the religious aspect of the affair, representing it as a political *coup d'état,* carried through by the help of the royal bodyguard. The religious and popular character of the movement is emphasized in the parallel fragment (verses 13–18[a]), to which belongs also the more dramatic account of Athaliah's death. The amalgamation of the documents had certainly been made before the time of the chronicler, whose whole treatment of the incident affords a characteristic example of the freedom with which he accommodates the facts of history to the law and usage of his own time.

4. the Carites were foreign mercenaries employed as body-

and brought them to him into the house of the LORD;
and he made a covenant with them, and took an oath of
them in the house of the LORD, and shewed them the
5 king's son. And he commanded them, saying, This is
the thing that ye shall do: a third part of you, that come
in on the sabbath, shall be keepers of the watch of the
6 king's house; and a third part shall be at the gate Sur;
and a third part at the gate behind the guard: so shall
7 ye keep the watch of the house, and be a barrier. And
the two companies of you, even all that go forth on the
sabbath, shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD

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guards by the kings of Judah, like the Krethi and Plethi in the time of Solomon (see on 1 Kings i. 38). It is important to notice that the same body of troops furnished the guard both for the palace and the temple. The presence of these 'uncircumcized foreigners' was obnoxious to the later conception of the sanctity of the temple (see especially Ezek. xliv. 6 ff.); hence in the narrative of 2 Chron. their place is taken by Levites assembled from all the cities of Judah.

took an oath . . . LORD: or, 'made them swear by the house of Yahweh' (cf. Matt. xxiii. 16).

shewed them the king's son: of whose existence they had of course been ignorant.

5–8. These directions to the centurions presupposes a knowledge of the routine observed in the disposition of the guards, which we unfortunately do not possess. What appears the best explanation was first given by Wellhausen. The guard was divided into three companies. On week days two of these were on duty in the palace and the third in the temple. On the sabbath the order was reversed, two companies being on guard in the temple and one in the palace. The essential feature of Jehoiada's scheme is the assembling of the whole guard within the temple at the critical time, so as to leave the palace entirely denuded of troops. For this purpose he chooses the moment when on the sabbath the two companies have come up from the palace to relieve the third, which ought immediately to return to its quarters. By detaining this third division he attains his end: the whole guard (as verse 9 clearly shows) is present, and takes part in the coronation of the king. The only obstacle to this interpretation lies in verse 6; but that very obscure verse appears on any view irreconcileable with verse 9, and must be omitted as

about the king. And ye shall compass the king round 8
about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and he
that cometh within the ranks, let him be slain: and be
ye with the king when he goeth out, and when he cometh
in. And the captains over hundreds did according to 9
all that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took
every man his men, those that were to come in on the
sabbath, with those that were to go out on the sabbath,
and came to Jehoiada the priest. And the priest de- 10
livered to the captains over hundreds the spears and
shields that had been king David's, which were in the
house of the LORD. And the guard stood, every man 11
with his weapons in his hand, from the right side of the
house to the left side of the house, along by the altar
and the house, by the king round about. Then he 12
brought out the king's son, and put the crown upon him,

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a gloss. With this excision, and some minor changes of text, the passage may be translated as follows: 'The third part of you—those that turn in [to their barracks in the palace] on the sabbath and keep guard in the palace; and the two other companies of you—all those that turn out [from their barracks] on the sabbath and keep guard in the temple: ye shall compass the king,' &c.

when he goeth out (i. e. from the temple), **and . . . cometh in** (to the palace): see verse 19.

10. Ewald makes the interesting suggestion that the weapons were David's own spear and shield, which had been preserved as relics in the temple, and perhaps played some part at every coronation ceremony: 'it would be a mistake to suppose that in the original narrative the soldiers of the captains came to the temple without weapons, and that there the high priest distributed the weapons of David to them through the captains.' More probably, however, the verse is a gloss introduced from 2 Chron., where it has a meaning as applied to the arming of the *Levites* for a particular occasion.

11. The meaning seems to be that the guards were drawn up in ranks right across the court from south to north, and facing the altar and the temple. The phrase **by the king round about** cannot possibly be correct, since the king had not yet been brought out.

and *gave him* the testimony; and they made him king,
and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and
13 said, God save the king. And when Athaliah heard the
noise of the guard *and of* the people, she came to the
14 people into the house of the LORD: and she looked,
and, behold, the king stood by the pillar, as the manner
was, and the captains and the trumpets by the king;
and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with
trumpets. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried,
15 Treason, treason. And Jehoiada the priest commanded
the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and
said unto them, Have her forth between the ranks; and
him that followeth her slay with the sword: for the
priest said, Let her not be slain in the house of the LORD.
16 So they made way for her; and she went by the way of

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12. and gave him **the testimony:** i. e. the law-book, which was supposed to be handed to the king at his coronation. But there is no evidence of any such custom; and context and construction alike demand that some part of the regalia should be indicated. We may read with Wellhausen, 'and the bracelets[1]' (see 2 Sam. i. 10), or, 'and the ornaments[2]' (Oort).

13. Here we enter on the second narrative, in which the influential part is played, not by the guard and its centurions, but by the people under its military leaders. The word for **the guard** in this verse appears from its ungrammatical position in the Hebrew to be a harmonizing gloss to 'people,' carelessly inserted to connect the narrative with the preceding.

14. by the pillar: apparently the spot where the king usually stood when he worshipped in the temple (cf. xxiii. 3). Whether it was by one of the great entrance pillars, Jachin and Boaz, we cannot tell.

15. the captains of hundreds: probably another insertion borrowed from the other document (verses 4, 9, 10ᵃ). The clause immediately following should be rendered: 'the commanders of the army.'

16. they made way for her: better, 'they laid hands on her.'

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[1] *Reading* הצערות *for* העדות. [2] העדיות.

the horses' entry to the king's house: and there was she slain.

17 And Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD's people; between the king also and the people.
18 And all the people of the land went to the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house of the LORD.
19 And he took the captains over hundreds, and the Carites, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, and came by the way of the gate of the guard unto the king's house. And he sat on the throne of the kings.
20 So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet: and they slew Athaliah with the sword at the king's house.

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the horses' entry: as distinguished from the 'gate of the foot-guards' (verse 19).

17. The covenant has two sides: it establishes (1) a *religious* relation between Yahweh on the one part and the king and people on the other—they are to be 'a people of Yahweh'; and (2) a *political* relation between the king on the one hand and the people on the other (cf. xxiii. 3).

18 a. The revolution culminates, according to this account, in the abolition of Baal-worship in Jerusalem.

Mattan is a contraction of *Mattan-Baal* (gift of Baal), a name common in Phoenician (*KAT*^{3}, p. 104).

18 b is the immediate continuation of verse 12 in the principal narrative. For **officers** render 'guards.'

19. Leaving these guards to keep order in the temple court, Jehoiada leads the main body down to the palace to complete the installation of the king in the usual manner (cf. 1 Kings i. 35, 46). The **gate of the [foot-]guards** was doubtless that through which the king regularly passed from the temple to the palace and back again, accompanied by his bodyguard (see 1 Kings xiv. 28).

20. the city was quiet: the change of government being acceptable to all classes.

21 [D] Jehoash was seven years old when he began to
12 reign. In the seventh year of Jehu began Jehoash to
reign; and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem: and his
2 mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. And Jehoash
did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD all his
3 days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him. Howbeit
the high places were not taken away: the people still
sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

4 [J] And Jehoash said to the priests, All the money of

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xii. *Jehoash of Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xxiv.)

xi. 21—xii. 3 [= Hebrew, xii. 1–4]. *Introductory Notice.* The compiler is not likely to have been responsible for the transposition of the first two clauses of the formula. LXX (L) gives them in the proper, and doubtless original, order: first the synchronism (xii. 1, down to 'reign'), and then the age of accession (xi. 21). It is this irregularity which has caused the divergence between the Hebrew printed editions and the E. V. in the numbering of the verses: the latter has been guided by the consideration that the synchronism regularly opens a new section.

1. the seventh year of Jehu: see xi. 4. Jehoash, therefore, must have been under a year old at the time of the massacre. On an irregularity in the synchronism, see on xiii. 1.

2. wherein Jehoiada, &c.: rather, 'forasmuch as . . .' The relative clause is anyhow not restrictive; for the compiler certainly means that Jehoash was a good king all his days (see xiv. 3). It is only the chronicler who, finding evidence of apostasy in the later troubles of his reign, limits his piety to the lifetime of Jehoiada (2 Chron. xxiv. 2).

3. See on 1 Kings iii. 2, 3.

xii. 4–16 [= Hebrew, xii. 5–17]. *Repair of the Temple.* The passage describes the origin of certain standing regulations for the repair of the temple, which remained in force probably down to the Exile (see ch. xxii). In the earlier period the maintenance of the fabric had presumably been a charge on the royal exchequer; and it is likely that the arrangements introduced by Jehoash represent the first attempt to throw the expense on the public, and make the temple self-supporting. The first method tried was to entrust the priests with the collecting of the temple-dues and voluntary offerings of the people, and hold them responsible for all needful repairs. But after some years it was found that the priests had neglected their obligations; and a new system

the hallowed things that is brought into the house of the LORD, in current money, the money of the persons for whom each man is rated, and all the money that it

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had to be devised. The priests were relieved of the duty of repairing the house, and also of the privilege of collecting the money; they were ordered to put all their receipts into a chest provided for the purpose, whose contents were to be removed from time to time by a palace official, and paid directly to those who had the oversight of the work. This plan seems to have worked admirably—a fact little creditable to the priesthood, for it is expressly attributed to the superior conscientiousness of the laymen who handled the money over their clerical brethren. The chronicler gives a different version: in particular he avoids anything reflecting on the honour of the priests, and only records a mild censure on the Levites for remissness in the performance of their allotted task.

Wellhausen rightly calls attention to a close resemblance in style and matter between this section and chs. xxii, xxiii; and infers that both passages (along with xi. 5 ff. and xvi. 10 ff.) are extracted from a continuous History of the Temple, written towards the end of the seventh century[1]. That, however, is perhaps a too narrow conception of the writer's standpoint: it is applicable to xii. 4 ff. and xvi. 10 ff., where the interest is concentrated on the affairs of the temple itself; but hardly to chs. xi or xxii, xxiii, which deal with important national transactions of which the temple happened to be the scene. All that can safely be said is that the document (or documents) reveals the prominent place naturally occupied by the temple and its priesthood in the history of the southern kingdom. There seems really no need to look for any other source than the book of the chronicles of Judah (see Introd. pp. 25, 29).

4. the money of the hallowed things, &c., includes all money payments that came into the temple treasury; and these are of two kinds: (1) assessments imposed by the priests according to a fixed tariff, and (2) free-will offerings. Instead of **in current money**, we must read with LXX (L) 'the money of each man's assessment.' The following clause, **the money . . . rated**, is merely an explanatory gloss, modelled on the technical terminology of the Priestly Code. An illustration of what is meant is supplied by Lev. xxvii. 2 ff., where the tariff by which persons dedicated to Yahweh were assessed, according to age and sex, is given.

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[1] To the same source he is inclined to assign the description of the temple buildings in 1 Kings vi, vii.

cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of
5 the LORD, let the priests take it to them, every man from
his acquaintance: and they shall repair the breaches of
6 the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found. But
it was so, that in the three and twentieth year of king
Jehoash the priests had not repaired the breaches of the
7 house. Then king Jehoash called for Jehoiada the
priest, and for the *other* priests, and said unto them,
Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now
therefore take no *more* money from your acquaintance,
8 but deliver it for the breaches of the house. And the
priests consented that they should take no *more* money
from the people, neither repair the breaches of the house.
9 But Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole
in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right
side as one cometh into the house of the LORD: and the

The other class of offerings is described in the last clause of the verse: **all the money that it cometh**, &c.

5. Out of the money thus received the priests were to defray the cost of repairs. The word for **acquaintance** (which occurs only here) is of doubtful meaning: it is hardly credible that each priest dealt only with his own personal friends.

6, 7. On discovering how the stipulated obligation had been evaded, Jehoash takes the whole body of the priests to task for their delinquency. The incident throws an instructive light on the position of the priesthood in pre-Exilic times. The king is the real head of the sanctuary, which is still, in spite of its increasing importance for the public religion, primarily the royal chapel; and the priests exercise over it only a delegated authority (cf. xvi. 10 ff.).

9. beside the altar . . . right side: the altar was in the middle of the court, whereas the natural position of a chest which was in charge of **the priests that kept the** threshold (marg.) would be near the entrance (so 2 Chron xxiv. 8). Hence Stade, on the authority of some MSS. of the LXX, would change **altar** (*mizbēăḥ*) to *mazzēbāh*, assuming that a mazzebah stood somewhere near the gate. A better sense is given by a purely conjectural emendation of Klostermann: 'near the southern (right hand) door-post.'

priests that kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the LORD. And it was so, 10
when they saw that there was much money in the chest, that the king's scribe and the high priest came up, and they put up in bags and told the money that was found in the house of the LORD. And they gave the money 11
that was weighed out into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they paid it out to the carpenters and the builders, that wrought upon the house of the LORD, and to the 12
masons and the hewers of stone, and for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair it. But there were not made for the house of the 13
LORD cups of silver, snuffers, basons, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money that was brought into the house of the LORD: for they gave 14
that to them that did the work, and repaired therewith the house of the LORD. Moreover they reckoned not 15
with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to give to them that did the work: for they dealt faithfully. The money for the guilt offerings, and the 16

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that kept the threshold: evidently an important office: cf. xxii. 4, xxiii. 4, xxv. 18, Jer. xxxv. 4.

10. and the high priest is thought by some to be an interpolation. Throughout the passage Jehoiada is simply called 'the priest'; and it is doubted if the title here used (*hakkōhēn haggādôl*) is anywhere genuine in pre-Exilic writings (see on xxii. 4).

11, 12. The list of artificers conveys some notion of the dilapidated condition of the edifice.

13, 14. On the utensils, see 1 Kings vii. 50. There was no money to spare for the renewal of these vessels, the whole being required for more urgent structural repairs.

16. Two classes of offerings were exempted from the regulations just described, and remained the perquisites of the priests,

money for the sin offerings, was not brought into the house of the LORD: it was the priests'.

17 [KJ] Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it: and Hazael set his face to go
18 up to Jerusalem. And Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and of the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria: and
19 he went away from Jerusalem. [D] Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in
20 the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and smote Joash at the house of Millo, *on the way* that goeth down

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viz. the **guilt offerings** and the **sin offerings.** These represented money payments for certain ritual offences, probably those atoned for at a later time by the special kinds of sacrifice designated by the same names (cf. Lev. iv, v. See W. R. Smith, *OTJC*[2], p. 263 f.; *Rel. of Sem.*[2], pp. 347 f., 423).

xii. 17, 18 [= Hebrew, xii. 18, 19]. *Hazael threatens Jerusalem.* We have here an extract from the annals of Judah. The redoubtable Hazael, extending his ravages from Israel (x. 32, xiii. 3) to the Philistine territory, captures the city of Gath (see on 1 Kings ii. 39), and has Jerusalem at his mercy. In order to save the capital Jehoash was obliged to hand over all the consecrated gifts that had accumulated in the temple and palace treasuries since they had been emptied for a similar purpose in the time of Asa (1 Kings xv. 18).

xii. 19–21 [= Hebrew, xii. 20–22]. *Concluding Formula, Assassination of Jehoash.* It is remarkable that Jehoash and his son Amaziah both perished by the hands of assassins. No motive is here assigned for the crime; but the chronicler credibly relates that it was in revenge for the execution of Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, whom Jehoash had caused to be stoned (2 Chron. xxiv. 25, 26). Verses 20, 21[a] are probably taken from the annalistic document.

20. the house of Millo . . . Silla: hopelessly corrupt. The

to Silla. For Jozacar the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead. 21

In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* seventeen years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. [KI] And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael, continually. [Z] And Jeho- 13 2 3 4

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one proper name may be a variant of the other; but a place *Silla* is not known, and it is altogether doubtful if the 'house of Millo' has anything to do with 'the Millo' of 1 Kings ix. 15, &c.

xiii. 1–9. *Jehoahaz of Israel.*

The section is in the main from the hand of the compiler, though the description of the Syrian oppression in verses 3 and 7 may be based on data from the official annals. The intermediate verses (4–6) are very perplexing (see below). They anticipate the recovery of Israel under Jehoash and Jeroboam II, but in such a way as to convey the erroneous impression that the tide began to turn during the reign of Jehoahaz (cf. verse 22 ff.). On the contrary, the military power of Israel was completely shattered, and she lay prostrate at the feet of her hereditary foe throughout the reign.

1. the three and twentieth year. The synchronism is correct according to the ordinary Hebrew computation, though at variance with xii. 1 (if twenty-third of Joash = twenty-eighth of Jehu, then first of Joash (= sixth of Athaliah) is sixth (not seventh) of Jehu).

3. continually: i. e. without intermission. It was perhaps the seeming absoluteness of this statement (as if the final rejection had already begun) which suggested to a late scribe to qualify it by the interpolation of verses 4–6. This writer is probably responsible for the kindred passages xiii. 23, xiv. 26 f. Whoever he was, he must have read the closing chapters of the northern

ahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, how that the
5 king of Syria oppressed them. (And the LORD gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in
6 their tents, as beforetime. Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, wherewith he made Israel to sin, but walked therein: and there
7 remained the Asherah also in Samaria.) [KI] For he left not to Jehoahaz of the people save fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria destroyed them, and made them like the
8 dust in threshing. [D] Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
9 Israel? And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they

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history with a sympathy which neither of the Deuteronomic editors anywhere evinces.

4. besought the LORD: as 1 Kings xiii. 6.

5. a saviour: 'deliverer'; cf. Judges iii. 9, 15. The deliverer in this instance is not, as some have supposed, the Assyrian king; but (as xiv. 27 shows) Jeroboam II.

7. For he left not, &c.: continuing verse 3[1]. The subject of the sentence is most naturally Yahweh, not Hazael.

people is here used, as often, in the sense of 'army.' When we consider that the army was a militia, in which all the male population was liable to be enrolled, we can appreciate the significance of this serious reduction of the fighting strength of the kingdom: cf. Amos iv. 10, v. 3.

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[1] This view of the construction, which is that of Stade, &c., is certainly preferable to the arrangement of R.V., which connects verse 7 with the end of verse 4. It does not, indeed, quite satisfactorily account for all the linguistic phenomena of the passage. The phraseology of verses 3–5 has remarkable affinities with some parts of the 'framework' of the book of Judges, which might almost suggest that the whole was from one hand. The writer of verses 4, 5 would appear to have remodelled the language of verse 3.

buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.

In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* sixteen years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin: but he walked therein. [Z] Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he

xiii. 10–25. *Jehoash of Israel.*

In addition to the framework (verses 10–13) the section contains (*a*) the conclusion of the Elisha-history (verses 14–21), and (*b*) an extract from the annals of Israel (verses 22, 24, 25). But how are we to account for the fact that both of these come *after* the concluding formula? If (*a*) alone were in question we might suppose that the insertion had been made later than the main redaction of the book; but obviously that theory fails to explain the displacement of (*b*). The easiest solution would be to follow the text of LXX (L), which transfers verses 12, 13 to the end of the chapter. But there are other facts to be taken into account, of which this rearrangement furnishes no explanation. In the first place, the wording of verse 13 is not at all in accordance with the usual manner of the compiler; and in the second place, the concluding notice on Jehoash is found in regular form in xiv. 15, 16, under Amaziah of Judah. Now the incident of xiv. 8–14 (Amaziah's challenge to Jehoash) belongs as much to the one reign as to the other; and its literary source is more likely to have been Israelitish than Judaean (see below, p. 353). We may therefore surmise that originally xiv. 8–14 followed xiii. 25, and was appropriately succeeded by the formula of xiv. 15 f. For some reason it was subsequently removed to its present position; and by an inadvertence of the editor the closing formula on Jehoash was transferred along with it. Finally, a still later scribe, struck by the absence of the concluding notice of Jehoash, made good the defect by inserting 12, 13.

xiii. 10, 11. *Introduction.*

10. The synchronism is here at fault, probably by a clerical error. Both xiii. 1 and xiv. 1 make the year of Jehoash's accession to have been the thirty-ninth of Jehoash of Judah.

xiii. 12, 13. On these verses, see the introductory note above; and cf. xiv. 15, 16.

did, and his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah
king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the
13 chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Joash slept with
his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and
Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

14 [Es] Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness
whereof he died: and Joash the king of Israel came
down unto him, and wept over him, and said, My father,
my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen
15 thereof! And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and
16 arrows: and he took unto him bow and arrows. And
he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the

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13. sat upon his throne is a phrase never used in the framework.

xiii. 14-21. *Death and Burial of Elisha.* The last scene in the life of Elisha is a pathetic tribute at once to his loyalty to the dynasty he had been the means of raising to the throne and to the great part he had played in his country's struggle for freedom. Over his death-bed the king of Israel shed tears of genuine and manly sorrow at the loss of one whose spirit had been the best defence of the realm—its chariots and its horsemen. The aged prophet roused himself to express once more in symbolic act his undying faith in Yahweh's power and Israel's victory. With his hands on the king's hands, as if he would infuse into him his own brave spirit, he made him shoot an arrow towards Damascus: it was the arrow of Yahweh's deliverance. Then he bade him smite the ground with the arrows; and when after three strokes Jehoash paused, he rebuked him for his lack of energy; and predicted that he should defeat the Syrians but thrice, whereas if he had gone on smiting he would have vanquished them utterly. After his death it was believed that his bones could work miracles; for it was reported that on one occasion a dead body flung hurriedly into the prophet's tomb on the approach of a band of marauders was restored to life.

14. wept over his face (marg.): cf. Gen. l. 1.

My father: as vi. 21.

the chariots of Israel, &c. See on ii. 12. Whatever be the meaning of the expression in the earlier passage, there is no doubt that here it is used metaphorically: Elisha had been more to Israel than its chariots and horsemen.

bow: and he put his hand *upon it.* And Elisha laid his hands upon the king's hands. And he said, Open the 17
window eastward: and he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot: and he shot. And he said, The LORD'S arrow of victory, even the arrow of victory over Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them. And he said, Take the arrows: and he took them. 18
And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground: and he smote thrice, and stayed. And the 19
man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

And Elisha died, and they buried him. Now the 20
bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. And it came to pass, as they were 21
burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and as

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17. in Aphek: see on 1 Kings xx. 26.

eastward: the direction of Damascus. Shooting an arrow into an enemy's country was a common symbol of the declaration of war. The fighting at Aphek is not recorded, but must undoubtedly have taken place.

18. and stayed. The action is to the prophet the revelation of a flaw in the character of Jehoash—a lack of grit and determination, a disposition to rest satisfied with something less than the utmost attainable—which made high achievement impossible.

19. The promise of verse 17 is accordingly restricted, through the fault of the king.

Thou shouldest have smitten: LXX reads: 'If thou hadst smitten.'

20. invaded should be 'used to invade': it was a yearly occurrence. How long after Elisha's death this occurred there is absolutely nothing to indicate.

at the coming in of the year. The text is ungrammatical and corrupt: perhaps 'year by year.'

21. and as soon as, &c. Read, with LXX (L), 'and went away; and when the man touched,' &c. (cf. marg.).

soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

22 [KI] And Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all
23 the days of Jehoahaz. [Z] But the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither
24 cast he them from his presence as yet. [KI] And Hazael king of Syria died; and Ben-hadad his son
25 reigned in his stead. And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of

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xiii. 22-25. *Successes against the Syrians.* The return of prosperity to Israel in the time of Jehoash was partly due perhaps to the death of Hazael and the succession of a feebler monarch; but the principal cause was a renewal of Assyrian activity in the west. About 803, Ramman-nirari III led a great expedition to the Mediterranean coast, in the course of which he marched against Damascus, where he encountered no resistance. It is true that amongst the countries subdued at this time the inscription mentions also 'the land of Humri' (i. e. Israel); but the net effect of the breaking of the power of Damascus was to restore the balance of power amongst the western states and enable Israel for a time to hold its own. Verses 22, 24, 25 may be taken from the Israelitish annals; verse 23 is an interpolation of the same character as verses 4-6. LXX (L) inserts it between verses 6 and 7.

22. oppressed: better, 'had oppressed.' After this verse LXX (L) has preserved an ancient and valuable notice: 'And Hazael had taken the Philistine out of his (Jehoahaz's) hand from the western Sea unto Aphek.'

23. as yet: or, 'until now' (marg.) is wanting in LXX (B) and other MSS.

24. Ben-hadad his son: on the name, see on 1 Kings xx. 1. The contemporary king of Damascus is called on Ramman-nirari's inscription *Mari'*. In all probability he is the same who is here called Ben-hadad, the third of that name mentioned in the O. T. (Winckler, *Alttest. Untersuchungen*, p. 66).

25. Amongst the cities retaken may have been Lo-debar and Karnaim, according to a conjectural emendation of Amos vi. 13 (see Driver, in *Camb. Bible*).

Hazael the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Joash smite him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

[D] In the second year of Joash son of Joahaz king of 14
Israel began Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah to
reign. He was twenty and five years old when he began 2
to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in
Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jehoaddin of
Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the eyes 3
of the LORD, yet not like David his father: he did
according to all that Joash his father had done. How- 4
beit the high places were not taken away: the people
still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.
And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom was 5

Three times: in fulfilment of Elisha's prediction (verse 19).

xiv. 1–22. *Amaziah of Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xxv.)

The introduction (verses 1–4) is followed by a pair of annalistic notices (verses 5–7), on the execution of the murderers of the late king and the re-conquest of Edom. Then comes (in 8–14) a long and graphic narrative of how Amaziah, his head turned by his victories in Edom, was foolhardy enough to measure his strength with Jehoash of Israel, and suffered a humiliating defeat. The whole tone of this passage, as well as an incidental expression in verse 11, shows that it is taken, not from a Judaean, but from an Ephraimitic source, possibly the chronicles of the northern kingdom. The remainder of the section is written by the compiler, with the exception of an interpolation in verse 17, and two extracts from the annals in verses 19–21, 22.

xiv. 1–4. *Introduction.*

1. In the second year. See on xiii. 10.

2. twenty and nine years. A comparison with xiii. 10 and xv. 1 brings to light a discrepancy of twelve years between the duration of this reign and the synchronistic scheme, the first of two serious errors that have crept into the chronology of Kings. See Introd. p. 42; and below on xv. 1.

4. Cf. 1 Kings iii. 2 f.

xiv. 5, 6. *Punishment of the Murderers of Jehoash.* See xii. 20, 21.

established in his hand, that he slew his servants which
6 had slain the king his father: but the children of the
murderers he put not to death: according to that which
is written in the book of the law of Moses, as the LORD
commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to
death for the children, nor the children be put to death
for the fathers; but every man shall die for his own sin.
7 [KJ] He slew of Edom in the Valley of Salt ten
thousand, and took Sela by war, and called the name of
it Joktheel, unto this day.

8 [KI?] Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the

6. The sparing of the children of the guilty persons was evidently a new departure in jurisprudence, indicating an advance in the moral sentiment of the community. Examples of the older practice are found in the case of Achan (Joshua vii. 24 ff.), and even the quite recent instance of Naboth (ix. 26).

The reference to **the book of the law of Moses** is to Deut. xxiv. 16, Deuteronomy being the only law-book known to the compiler. (Cf. 1 Kings ii. 3.)

xiv. 7. *Victory over the Edomites.* Since Jehoram's abortive attempt to suppress the revolt (viii. 20–22) Edom had maintained its independence against Judah; and the contemporary notices seem to show that even this signal success of Amaziah did not result in the permanent subjugation of the country. We may perhaps infer from verse 22 that the object of the campaign was to secure the possession of the port of Elath, and the trade-routes between it and Judah.

7. the Valley of Salt (cf. 2 Sam. viii. 13) is by most localized in the marshy plain to the south of the Dead Sea. Buhl (*Geog.* p. 88) identifies it with the modern wadi of the same name (*Wadi el-Milḥ*), east of Beer-sheba.

Sela: or, 'the rock' (marg.) (Judges i. 36; Isa. xvi. 1), has commonly been taken to be the name of Petra, the rock-city, the capital of Edom. The identification has been recently disputed (see Moore, on *Judges* i. 36); and the fact that the place bore the name **Joktheel, unto this day** is certainly not in favour of it.

xiv. 8–14. *Amaziah's Encounter with Jehoash.* Elated by his recent success (see verse 10) Amaziah boastfully challenges Jehoash of Israel to a trial of strength. Jehoash at first answers with a contemptuous parable, advising him to rest on his laurels

son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us look one another in the face. And Jehoash 9
the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle. Thou hast indeed 10
smitten Edom, and thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory thereof, and abide at home; for why shouldest thou meddle to *thy* hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee? But Amaziah would not 11
hear. So Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah. And Judah 12

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and nurse his vanity at home. But when Amaziah refuses to take warning he marches against him, and the two armies meet at Beth-shemesh, west of Jerusalem, where the Judaeans suffer a crushing defeat. Their king is taken prisoner, a large piece of the north wall of the capital is destroyed, the temple and palace are rifled, and hostages are taken for future behaviour. The incident illustrates the relative importance of the two kingdoms ever since the disruption of the nation. The two latest commentators assume that the old relation of vassalship still subsisted between them, and understand Amaziah's challenge as an assertion of his independence. But the Israelitish suzerainty must have terminated with the dynasty of Omri, and it does not appear that any of the subsequent kings was strong enough to recover it, unless, indeed, it were Jehoash himself. The conduct of Amaziah has to be construed as the sheer insolence of success. On the original position of the verses, see above, p. 349.

8. look one another in the face: a strange expression for 'confront one another in battle.' Jehoash's parable, to be sure, seems to interpret it as merely a claim to treat with him on terms of equality. But the details of the parable cannot be pressed; and in verse 12 the fighting follows as a matter of course.

10. meddle to thy hurt should be rendered as marg. 'provoke calamity.'

11. Beth-shemesh. See on 1 Kings iv. 9.

which belongeth to Judah shows that the writer is an Ephraimite (cf. 1 Kings xix. 3).

was put to the worse before Israel; and they fled every
13 man to his tent. And Jehoash king of Israel took
Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of
Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and
brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of
Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.
14 And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels
that were found in the house of the LORD, and in the
treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and
15 returned to Samaria. [D] Now the rest of the acts of
Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought
with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the
16 book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And
Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria
with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam his son reigned
in his stead.

17 [Z] And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah

13. and came. Read, as LXX and 2 Chron. xxv. 23, 'and brought him.'

the gate of Ephraim, as the name indicates, must have been that through which the road to Ephraim issued: therefore, in the northern wall.

the corner gate was probably at the north-west angle of the wall.

four hundred cubits: 200 yards or upwards (see on 1 Kings vi. 2).

xiv. 15, 16. On the displacement of these verses, see above, p. 349.

xiv. 17-22. *Concluding Formula. Death of Amaziah.* Like his father Jehoash (xii. 20 f.), Amaziah was put to death by his own subjects. The 'conspiracy,' however, was in this case no mere palace intrigue, but a popular insurrection in favour of the young prince Azariah, a result probably of the misfortunes into which the state had been plunged by the folly of Amaziah. The king fled to Lachish, where the insurgents overtook and slew him; but his body was buried with due honours at Jerusalem. The section undoubtedly incorporates annalistic material, and is not quite in the compiler's usual vein.

lived after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years. [D] Now the rest of the acts of 18
Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? [KJ] And they made 19
a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish: but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there. And they brought him upon horses: and he 20
was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David. And all the people of Judah took Azariah, who 21
was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah. He built Elath, and restored it 22
to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

[D] In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash 23

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17 is a note inserted by a scribe to mark the interval between the two concluding formulas. The chronology corresponds with xiii. 10, xiv. 2.

19. Lachish is now pretty surely identified (by Petrie) with *Tell el-Hasi*, at the mouth of a valley in the Shephelah, about thirty-five miles south-west of Jerusalem (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.* p. 234). See xviii. 14.

22. The peculiar position of the verse cannot be fully explained. It has certainly a connexion with verse 7; and perhaps the most natural interpretation is that Amaziah had succeeded in capturing Elath, but had afterwards lost it owing to his defeat by Jehoash; and that its recovery was one of the first exploits of Azariah after his accession. But if that be the meaning, it is difficult to see why the notice was not reserved for the history of Azariah.

On the situation of **Elath**, see 1 Kings ix. 26.

xiv. 23–29. *Jeroboam II of Israel.*

The reign of Jeroboam II was the most brilliant, as it was by far the longest, in the history of the northern kingdom. His success was largely due to the crippling of Damascus and the neighbouring states by repeated raids of the Assyrians under Shalmaneser III (782–772) and Asshurdan III (772–754); while the inactivity of Asshur-nirari (754–746) gave an opportunity for the expansion of Israel such as no previous monarch had enjoyed. Jeroboam accordingly extended his dominions to the utmost limits of Solomon's empire; and the country, enriched by the tribute

king of Judah Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, *and reigned* forty and one
24 years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin.
25 [KI] He restored the border of Israel from the entering in of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the
26 prophet, which was of Gath-hepher. [Z] For the LORD saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter: for there was none shut up nor left at large, neither was
27 there any helper for Israel. And the LORD said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of

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of subjugated states, rose rapidly to an unprecedented height of material prosperity. The brief and colourless narrative before us requires to be supplemented from the pages of Amos and Hosea before we can form a true estimate of the character and splendour of the reign of Jeroboam.

xiv. 23, 24. *Introduction.*

23. The chronology is still at fault. The synchronistic statement agrees with verses 1 and 17 (but not with xv. 1); but the length of reign conflicts with xv. 8 (see on these verses).

xiv. 25-27. *Expansion of the Empire.* See introductory note to the section. Verse 25 may be abridged from the annals; verses 26 and 27 appear to be from the same writer as xiii. 4 f., 23.

25. Cf. Amos vi. 14.

from the entering in of Hamath. See 1 Kings viii. 65.

the sea of the Arabah is the Dead Sea; the Arabah being to this day the name of the depression which connects the Jordan valley with the head of the Gulf of Akaba.

The reference to **Jonah the son of Amittai** shows that in the prophets religion and patriotism still went hand in hand. Jonah was a *confrère* of Elisha rather than of Amos.

Gath-hepher was a town of Zebulon (Joshua xix. 13); and the grave of Jonah is still shown in the vicinity of Nazareth.

26. shut up nor left . . . . See on 1 Kings xiv. 10.

27. said not that . . .: 'had not purposed to blot out.'

but he saved: 'and so he delivered.'

Joash. [D] Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and 28
all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how
he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, *which had belonged*
to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of
the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jeroboam 29
slept with his fathers, even with the kings of Israel; and
Zechariah his son reigned in his stead.

In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of 15
Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to
reign. Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign; 2
and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem: and his

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xiv. 28, 29. *Conclusion.*

28. and how he recovered . . . Israel. The sentence is unintelligible in the Hebrew; and even the excision of the words **to Judah** hardly yields a tolerable sense. The idea conveyed by the R. V., that Damascus and Hamath had once been in the possession of Judah and were now transferred to Israel, is wholly baseless; and a 'recovery' of these territories either to Israel or Judah could not be spoken of. The meaning remains obscure.

xv. 1–7. *Azariah of Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xxvi.)

The record of this long and fortunate reign is disappointingly meagre. There is evidence that under Azariah (or Uzziah) the kingdom of Judah enjoyed a period of exceptional prosperity, although the causes of that prosperity may not be so obvious as those to which the contemporary greatness of North Israel can be traced. The early prophecies of Isaiah prove that the resources of the state had been wisely administered for a considerable time; and the Book of Chronicles has much to tell of Uzziah's successful military enterprises, and his measures for the defence of the land and the development of its natural advantages. It has been thought that further evidence of his power was found in an Assyrian inscription of Tiglath-pileser III, which mentions an Azariah of *Ja'udi* as the leader of a great confederacy of North Syrian states, in 738 B. C. But it seems no longer possible to uphold the identification of Ja'udi with Judah, or of its king with the Azariah of the O. T. (see Whitehouse in *DB*, iv. p. 844 f.).

1. In the twenty and seventh year: at variance with xiv. 2, 23. If Jeroboam began to reign in the fifteenth year of Amaziah (xiv. 23), and Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years (xiv. 2, 17), the first year of Azariah must have been the fifteenth of Jeroboam. See further on verse 8 below; Introd. p. 42.

3 mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. And he did
that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, according
4 to all that his father Amaziah had done. Howbeit the
high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed
5 and burnt incense in the high places. [KJ] And the
LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the
day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. And
Jotham the king's son was over the household, judging
6 the people of the land. [D] Now the rest of the acts of
Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the
7 book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And
Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with
his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son
reigned in his stead.

8 In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah

The name **Azariah** is all but peculiar to the Book of Kings; elsewhere (except 1 Chron. iii. 12) the form Uzziah is used. Uzziah appears in verses 13, 30, 32, 34 of this chapter; but in each case the LXX reads Azariah, which probably stood in the original text.

5. in a several house. The phrase was unintelligible to the Greek translators, and its exact sense is uncertain. The king was certainly isolated and relieved of the duties of government; but that he was confined in 'a lazar house' (marg.) is in itself improbable, and is not justified by the Hebrew text. The most attractive interpretation is obtained by an ingenious correction of Klostermann, who reads: 'he dwelt *in his own house unmolested*' (strictly, 'at liberty'), in contrast with ordinary lepers, who were expelled from the city (vii. 3.) How long the regency of Jotham lasted we cannot determine (see Introd. p. 45 f.).

xv. 8–12. *Zechariah of Israel.*

After the death of Jeroboam II the northern kingdom plunged into another period of anarchy and civil war, which lasted till the end: usurper after usurper seizing the crown, and royal assassinations being the order of the day. His son and successor, Zechariah, thus perished after a reign of six months. Verse 10 may be assigned to the annals.

8. In the thirty and eighth year. In order to reconcile the synchronism with xiv. 23, we should have either to read: 'In

did Zechariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months. And he did that which was evil in 9
the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin. [KI] And 10
Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead. [D] Now the rest of the acts of Zechariah, 11
behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. This was the word of the LORD 12
which he spake unto Jehu, saying, Thy sons to the fourth generation shall sit upon the throne of Israel. And so it came to pass.

Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine 13
and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned the space of a month in Samaria. [KI] And 14
Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

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the twenty-seventh year,' or else to assign to Jeroboam a reign of fifty-two years. On the other hand, if we accept the statement of xv. 1, we find a discrepancy of no less than twenty-three years. Two independent errors of considerable magnitude appear to vitiate the chronology (Introd. p. 42).

10. before the people. Read, with LXX (L), 'in Ibleam' (see on ix. 27).

12. Cf. x. 30.

xv. 13–16. *Shallum of Israel.*

Shallum's possession of the throne was so soon contested that Kittel concludes that after the death of Jeroboam II two rival parties had been contending for the mastery, one under Shallum, and the other under Menahem, who held Tirzah, the ancient capital of the kingdom (*History*, Eng. trans., ii. p. 332 f.). The order of the section is somewhat irregular; the annalistic notices of verses 14 and 16 (which appear to stand in reversed order) being separated by the closing formula.

14. Tirzah. See 1 Kings xiv. 17.

15 [D] Now the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they are written in the
16 book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. [KI] Then Menahem smote Tiphsah, and all that were therein, and the borders thereof, from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.

17 [D] In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over
18 Israel, *and reigned* ten years in Samaria. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of
19 Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin. [KI] There

16. Tiphsah cannot be the Tiphsah on the Euphrates (1 Kings iv. 24), and no town of the name in Palestine is known. We may probably read *Tappûăḥ*, a town on the borders of Ephraim and Manasseh (Joshua xvi. 8, xvii. 7). It was held by the partisans of Shallum; and Menahem attacks it **from Tirzah,** the centre of his own power.

xv. 17–22. *Menahem of Israel.*

The reign of Menahem is memorable for the first decisive intervention of Assyria in the internal affairs of Israel. Tiglath-pileser III mentions in his annals the name of *Minihimmu of Samirinai*, as one of a long list of kings from whom he received tribute in the eighth year of his reign (738 B.C.) (*COT*, p. 223 ff.)[1]. The Hebrew side of the incident is given in verses 19, 20, which are probably taken directly from the annals of the kingdom. We learn that Tiglath-pileser had actually invaded the country; and that in consideration of the tribute he not only withdrew his troops, but confirmed Menahem on the throne, which probably means that he supported him against the rival party. The transaction must apparently belong to the end of the reign; for we shall see presently that between 738 and 734 the crown twice changed hands. (Introd. p. 44 f.)

18. The phrase **all his days** stands in the Hebrew at the end; it is properly the beginning of verse 19, and ought to be read: 'In his days' (so LXX).

[1] The identification has, however, been disputed by Oppert and others.

came against the land Pul the king of Assyria; and
Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his
hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his
hand. And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even 20
of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels
of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of
Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.
[D] Now the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that 21
he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles
of the kings of Israel? And Menahem slept with his 22
fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.
In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekahiah 23
the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in
Samaria, *and reigned* two years. And he did that which 24

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19. Pul the king of Assyria is, as had long been suspected, Tiglath-pileser III (see verse 29). The two are indeed distinguished in 1 Chron. v. 26; but the identity is put beyond reasonable doubt by a comparison of two Babylonian inscriptions, one of which shows the name *Pulu* where the other has Tiglath-pileser (*Tukulti-abal-išarra*). See *KIB*, ii. p. 290 f. The most probable theory is that Pulu is the king's real name, and Tiglath-pileser that which he assumed when he usurped the throne of Assyria.

a thousand talents of silver: roundly about £400,000 in *quantity*. The last clause **to confirm . . . hand** is wanting in LXX (B).

20. exacted . . . of: perhaps 'distributed over' (*lit.* 'made to go out'). Klostermann changes the verb to 'commanded'; but this entails further alterations of the text, which are hardly justified.

mighty men of wealth (*lit.* 'heroes of valour') means simply well-to-do people, not necessarily landed proprietors merely. Taking the talent at 3,000 shekels, we find that there must have been sixty thousand such persons in Israel.

xv. 23-26. *Pekahiah of Israel.*

23. For **two years** LXX (L) reads 'ten years'; and even in the Hebrew text of xvii. 1 the synchronism seems based on the assumption of a ten years' reign of Pekahiah (see Introd. p. 43).

was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed no
from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith
25 he made Israel to sin. [KI] And Pekah the son o
Remaliah, his captain, conspired against him, and smote
him in Samaria, in the castle of the king's house, with
Argob and Arieh; and with him were fifty men of the
Gileadites: and he slew him, and reigned in his stead
26 [D] Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he
did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles
of the kings of Israel.
27 In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah
Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in
28 Samaria, *and reigned* twenty years. And he did that
which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not
from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith

The Assyrian chronology proves that two years is the utmost that can be allowed for the reign.

25. his captain: or, 'adjutant'; see on vii. 2, 1 Kings ix. 22.

the castle of the king's house: cf. 1 Kings xvi. 18.

with Argob and Arieh. Argob is the name of a district in Bashan (1 Kings iv. 13), and Arieh means 'the lion.' The clause is hopelessly obscure. The **fifty men . . . Gileadites** are of course the accomplices of Pekah, who was therefore presumably himself a Gileadite.

xv. 27–31. *Pekah of Israel.*

The chief event of Pekah's reign was the seizure of the northern province of the kingdom by Tiglath-pileser, and the deportation of the inhabitants to Assyria (verse 29). The annals of Tiglath-pileser show that this expedition belongs to the year 734 or 733. It had been preceded and occasioned by the Syro-Ephraimitic league against Judah, the notice of which is reserved for the histories of Jotham and Ahaz (see verse 37 and xvi. 5 ff.). Pekah must therefore have entered into the alliance with Damascus at the very beginning of his reign; and the prompt interference of Tiglath-pileser leaves no doubt as to what the ultimate aim of the confederacy was. It was an attempt to form a new coalition of Syrian states against Assyria; and Judah was to be coerced into it by force. The circumstances suggest that Pekah had

he made Israel to sin. [KI] In the days of Pekah king 29
of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took
Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah, and Janoah, and Kedesh,
and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of
Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria. And 30
Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against
Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew
him, and reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of
Jotham the son of Uzziah. [D] Now the rest of the acts 31

risen to power as the leader of an anti-Assyrian faction, and that Pekahiah had been assassinated because, like his father Menahem, he ruled as a protected vassal of the Assyrian empire. Pekah was in his turn murdered by Hoshea, the nominee of Tiglath-pileser; and the Assyrian records confirm the impression given by verse 30, that this took place in connexion with the punitive expedition of 734/3. The statement that Pekah reigned for twenty years is quite erroneous.

29. The depopulated district corresponds generally with that ravaged by the Syrians in the time of Asa: see on 1 Kings xv. 20. Two of the cities here named, **Ijon** and **Abel-beth-maacah**, are mentioned there, as well as the tribal name **Naphtali**; **Janoah** is unknown; **Kedesh** is the modern *Kades*, north-west of Lake Hūleh; on **Hazor** and **Galilee**, see 1 Kings ix. 15, 11.

Gilead cannot be the familiar name of the trans-Jordanic district: it is probably identical with a city *Gal*[. . .], mentioned along with Abel in the Assyrian account of the incident (the second syllable of the name is undecipherable).

carried them captive: or, 'exiled them'; the verb (as distinct, e. g., from that used in verse 2) expresses the idea of migration from home, though here the difference is perhaps inappreciable.

30. Hoshea is the leader of the pro-Assyrian party. Tiglath-pileser, indeed, claims for himself the honour of putting Pekah to death and setting *Ausi'* (Hoshea) on the throne; but the boasts of Assyrian kings are not always veracious. The truth seems to have been that Hoshea committed the murder, and then submitted to Tiglath-pileser and reigned as his vassal.

in the twentieth year of Jotham. The date would agree with verse 27, but is glaringly inconsistent with xvii. 1; moreover the Book of Kings assigns only sixteen years to Jotham. Since the statement is not in the compiler's usual manner, and could not have been in the chronicles of Israel (which never date events

of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

32 In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah
33 to reign. Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jerusha the daughter of
34 Zadok. And he did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD: he did according to all that his father Uzziah
35 had done. Howbeit the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places. He built the upper gate of the house

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by the records of the sister kingdom), it may be regarded as an interpolation. (But see Introd. p. 45, *note* [3].)

xv. 32–38. *Jotham of Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xxvii.)

The only occurrences thought worthy of record in this reign are the making of a new gate in the temple-court and the commencement of hostilities by Rezin and Pekah, annalistic notices of which are preserved in verses 35[b] and 37. From the narrative of Chronicles, which is no doubt based on authentic documents, Jotham seems to have continued the vigorous policy of his father, and to have reigned with credit and success.

35. built the upper gate. Of the gates in Solomon's temple very little is known. In xi. 19 we read (*a*) of a 'gate of the foot-guards,' which may have been that which communicated directly between the palace and the temple; if so, it must have been in the south wall of the temple-court. Jeremiah mentions (*b*) an 'upper gate of Benjamin' (xx. 2), (*c*) a 'new gate' (xxvi. 10, xxxvi. 10), and (*d*) a 'third entry' (xxxviii. 14, where, however, Giesebrecht reads 'gate of the body-guard'). From Ezek. viii. 3, ix. 2 we learn that there was (*e*) a 'northern gate.' These cannot have been all different. With Giesebrecht's emendation (*a*) and (*d*) may be safely identified, and located in the south wall. (*b*) and (*e*) are also probably identical; and the question is whether Jotham's 'upper gate' is this north gate (*b*, *e*) or the 'new gate' (*c*), or whether these again are the same. A gate built by Jotham would not be exactly 'new' in the time of Jeremiah, but if it was the newest it might easily bear the name. Still, since Jeremiah uses the two names, it is more probable that they were distinct, and that the gate here referred to was the same as (*b*).

of the LORD. Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and 36
all that he did, are they not written in the book of the
chronicles of the kings of Judah? In those days the 37
LORD began to send against Judah Rezin the king of
Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah. And Jotham 38
slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in
the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned
in his stead.

In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah 16
Ahaz the son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign.
Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign; and 2
he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and he did not
that which was right in the eyes of the LORD his God,
like David his father. But he walked in the way of the 3

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37. See on xvi. 5 ff.

xvi. *Ahaz of Judah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xxviii.)

The section on Ahaz contains, besides the framework, (1) an account of the combined expedition of Rezin and Pekah against Judah (verses 5–9)—this may be supposed taken from the annals of the reign; (2) a description of certain alterations made in the temple by order of Ahaz, including the erection of a new altar after a foreign model, and the removal of some parts of the temple furniture to raise money for the king of Assyria (10–18). The style of the passage is too diffuse, and the narrative too circumstantial, to be naturally attributed to an official annalist; in all probability it belongs to the same source as xii. 4 ff., whether that be the chronicles of Judah or a separate document.

xvi. 1–4. *Introduction.*

1. Ahaz. The full name was *Yĕhô-āḥāz*, as appears from an inscription of Tiglath-pileser, in which *Ya'u-ḥazi* of Judah is mentioned in a list of tributaries (*KIB*, ii. p. 20 f.; *COT*, i. p. 263).

2. According to xviii. 2, Hezekiah was twenty-five years old at the death of Ahaz; consequently Ahaz must have been ten years of age when his son was born. There must be an error in one of the passages.

3. The judgement on Ahaz is more severe than on any other king of Judah except Manasseh. Not only did he follow the example of the northern kings, but he imitated the worst abominations of the Canaanites.

kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through
the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen,
whom the LORD cast out from before the children of
4 Israel. And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high
places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.
5 [KJ] Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of
Remaliah king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to war:
and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him.

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made his son . . . fire: or, 'dedicated his son by fire.' (Cf. Exod. xiii. 12.) The expression is almost restricted to the rite of child-sacrifice; and, whatever its primary sense may be, undoubtedly denoted actual burning. Although the practice may have occurred sporadically in early Israel (see Judges xi. 34 ff.), and survived among the neighbouring Semites (iii. 27), it was only towards the fall of the state and in the decline of the national religion that it became a common feature of Hebrew worship (cf. xvii. 17, xxi. 6, xxiii. 10; Mic. vi. 7; Jer. vii. 31, xix. 5, &c.). Ahaz was perhaps the first to introduce it in Judah.

4. And he sacrificed: not merely allowed the people to do so, as the best of his predecessors had done. The phraseology of the close of the verse is Jeremianic: Jer. ii. 20, iii. 6, &c.

xvi. 5-9. *The Syro-Ephraimitic Invasion.* From xv. 37 it appears that the war had broken out in the reign of Jotham, though the situation became critical only after the accession of Ahaz. Isaiah's vivid description of the consternation produced in Jerusalem (Isa. vii. 1 ff.) suggests that the attack came as a surprise to the Judaeans; and possibly xv. 37 only implies that the plot had been hatched under Jotham, to be disclosed in all its alarming dimensions after his death. The object of the expedition, as has been stated above (p. 364), was to bring Judah into a league against Assyria; but it does not appear that Ahaz was ever given an opportunity to join it voluntarily; and the effect was to throw him into the arms of the Assyrian monarch. His action in seeking the protection of Tiglath-pileser was condemned by Isaiah, who judged it a needless sacrifice of the independence of the country, for a kind of service which Tiglath-pileser was sure to render in his own interests, without any bargain.

5. Rezin (Assyrian, *Raṣunnu*) was one of those who had paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser along with Menahem in 738 (see p. 362).

could not overcome him: *lit.* 'were unable to fight'; i. e. to come to close quarters.

At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to 6
Syria, and drave the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians
came to Elath, and dwelt there, unto this day. So Ahaz 7
sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying,
I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me
out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand
of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And 8
Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the
house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's
house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria.
And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: and the 9
king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it,
and carried *the people of* it captive to Kir, and slew
Rezin. [J] And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet 10

6. A collateral result of the war was the loss of Elath to Judah: see xiv. 22. The names **Syrians** (*Aramaeans*) and **Edomites** (marg.) are often confounded in the O. T.; and here the consonantal text favours the former reading, while the punctuators adopt the second. The latter are doubtless right; but in that case it is necessary to change **Syria** (Aram) to 'Edom' (twice), and omit **Rezin** as a mistake. As a matter of fact, Elath could not be 'recovered' to Syria, because it had never belonged to it. The verse must be read as a parenthesis.

drave: 'cleared out.'

7. Ahaz declares himself the vassal of Assyria.

8. Cf. verses 17, 18.

a present meant practically 'tribute'; and so Tiglath-pileser would regard it.

9. The Assyrian expedition against Israel, recorded in xv. 29, preceded that against Damascus, which was conquered after two years' fighting only in 732. The inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser mention the siege of the city, but do not (so far as yet discovered) describe its actual capture, or the death of Rezin.

to Kir: cf. Amos i. 5. The word is wanting here in the LXX.

xvi. 10–16. *Erection of a new Altar in the Temple.* Ahaz pays homage to Tiglath-pileser in Damascus, where he must have been detained for some time. He seems to have been a *virtuoso* in ritual, and being much pleased with the design of the Damascus altar, he sent orders to his priest in Jerusalem to have a similar one built for the temple against his return. This was done; and

Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and saw the altar that was at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the
11 priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof. And Urijah the priest built an altar: according to all that king Ahaz
12 had sent from Damascus, so did Urijah the priest make it against king Ahaz came from Damascus. And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the
13 altar: and the king drew near unto the altar, and offered thereon. And he burnt his burnt offering and his meal
14 offering, and poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings, upon the altar. And the brasen altar, which was before the LORD, he brought from the forefront of the house, from between his altar

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the king took the first opportunity of inspecting it, and then consecrated it in person. In connexion with this ceremony he introduced certain modifications of the ritual, which are unfortunately not very intelligible to us, but have an important bearing on the history of the temple cultus. The passage illustrates, at all events, even better than ch. xii, the absolute control exercised by the king over the temple and its worship.

10. the altar . . . Damascus. Whether it was of native design, or recently imported from Assyria, does not appear.

Urijah the priest is mentioned (but not necessarily as a friend) by Isaiah in viii. 2.

11, 12. The LXX has a shorter and possibly purer text, but the sense is not affected.

and offered thereon. Render, 'and went up upon it' (see marg.).

13. The ordinary rule seems to have been for the priest to offer the sacrifices of the king (see verse 15); but in this high function of consecrating a new altar Ahaz exercises the unchallenged royal privilege of officiating in person.

14. In the LXX the words 'and the altar' are wanting at the beginning, and the first clause reads as the continuation of verse 13. Accepting this text, we may render: 'and sprinkled . . . upon the altar (14) of brass which was before Yahweh; and drew near from before the house, between the house and the (new) altar, and applied it (the blood) to the north side of the (new) altar.' (So virtually W. R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*[2], Note K.)

and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of his altar. And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the 15 priest, saying, Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt offering, and the evening meal offering, and the king's burnt offering, and his meal offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their meal offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: but the brasen altar shall be for me to inquire by. Thus did Urijah the priest, according 16 to all that king Ahaz commanded. [KJ] And king Ahaz 17 cut off the borders of the bases, and removed the laver

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The essence of the initiatory ceremony would then lie in transferring the efficacy of the old altar to the new by sprinkling the sacrificial blood first on the one and then on the other. The rendering is not free from difficulty; but it gives a better idea than the common view, that the old altar was shifted to make place for the new. That, surely, must have been thought of before the new altar was built.

15. The purport of the regulation seems to be that the new altar is to replace the old for all ordinary purposes, while the brasen altar 'is reserved for one particular kind of offering by the king himself' (W. R. Smith, *ibid.*). Unfortunately the nature of that offering is not clear. The obscurity lies in the words rendered **for me to inquire by,** of which no thoroughly acceptable interpretation has been given. The verb is used in Rabbinical Hebrew of examining sacrificial animals for blemishes (see Burney, *Notes*, p. 327). Inspection of the entrails of victims was a common form of divination in Babylonia (cf. Ezek. xxi. 21); is it possible that we have here the introduction of that custom into the religion of Israel by Ahaz? The least sensible of all explanations is offered by Benzinger and Kittel: 'for me to think over' (viz. where I shall put it!).

xvi. 17, 18. *Spoliation of the Temple.* The sound administration of Azariah and Jotham may be supposed to have left to Ahaz a well replenished treasury; but it was soon drained by the annual tribute imposed by the king of Assyria. Hence the necessity for breaking up some of the temple furniture, as recorded in verse 17.

17. On the **borders** (or, 'panels') and **bases,** see 1 Kings vii. 27 ff.; on the **sea** and **oxen,** vii. 23 ff.

from off them; and took down the sea from off the brasen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a
18 pavement of stone. And the covered way for the sabbath that they had built in the house, and the king's entry without, turned he unto the house of the LORD,
19 because of the king of Assyria. [D] Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, are they not written in the
20 book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

17 In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began

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18. The first part of the verse reads in LXX: 'And the foundation of the chair (throne?) he built in the house of the Lord.' Either way the clause is obscure to us, as is also the one following; and it is difficult to see how what appear to be structural alterations could be **because of the king of Assyria.** On the other hand, these last words give a good sense in connexion with verse **17.**

xvii. 1-6. *Hoshea, the Last King of Israel.*

The extremely condensed narrative of verses 3-6 gives the following representation of the course of the events which led to the fall of the northern kingdom. Hoshea, who had held the throne as a vassal of Tiglath-pileser III (see on xv. 30), must have revolted under Shalmaneser IV, who accordingly leads an expedition against him. Hoshea then makes his submission, and pays tribute. Afterwards he is detected in treasonable negotiations with the king of Egypt, whereupon Shalmaneser puts him in prison—when and how is not stated. Finally the Assyrian king marches against the country, besieges Samaria for three years, and captures it in the ninth year of Hoshea's reign.

It cannot be denied that this account presents several historical difficulties. (1) It appears to imply two revolts of Hoshea, and two (if not three) campaigns of Shalmaneser. But the Assyrian records leave room for only one campaign against Israel in the short reign of Shalmaneser IV (727–722). The fall of Samaria took place in the first year of Sargon (certainly not later than 721); hence the siege must have commenced at latest in 723; and it is expressly recorded that in 726 no foreign expeditions were

Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel, *and reigned* nine years. And he did that which was evil 2
in the sight of the LORD, yet not as the kings of Israel

undertaken. It is in the highest degree unlikely that all the occurrences of verses 3–5 took place in the years 725–4, if they refer to two different campaigns with a rebellion between. (2) It is thought incredible that Samaria should have held out for three years after the king had been taken prisoner. (3) The capture of the city is dated in the ninth year of Hoshea, showing that in the view of the writer he was still reigning when Samaria was taken. On these last two points the Assyrian inscriptions have so far thrown no light whatever.

Some scholars, following Winckler (*Alttest. Unters.*, p. 15 ff.), explain these difficulties by the hypothesis of two parallel narratives of one campaign: the first (verses 3, 4) describing the fate of the king, and the second (verses 5, 6) the fate of the capital. Of these verses 5, 6 are a duplicate of xviii. 9–11, which may be plausibly assigned to the annals of Judah. To bring verses 3, 4 into line with the theory one or other of two expedients, both suggested by Winckler[1], is adopted. (*a*) Benzinger reads 3^b and 4^a as a retrospective parenthesis—'(for Hoshea had been his vassal and brought him tribute; but the king of Assyria had found, &c.).' The slight emendation necessary to elicit this sense is itself unsatisfactory in point of syntax. (*b*) Kittel adopts the other alternative, which is to delete the name Shalmaneser in verse 3, and take that verse as referring to Hoshea's first submission to Tiglath-pileser immediately after the fall of Pekah. A period of nine years would then intervene between verse 3 and verse 4, which commences the account of Shalmaneser's expedition of 724. But that involves the unnatural assumption that Hoshea, the leader of the Assyrian party, had to be coerced into submission by Tiglath-pileser. It does not appear to us quite certain that verses 3–6 cannot be read as a continuous narrative of Shalmaneser's single campaign, on the lines indicated in the notes below.

xvii. 1, 2. *Introduction.*

1. the twelfth year of Ahaz. This appears to presuppose a ten years' reign of Pekahiah (see on xv. 23). [Nine years of Pekahiah + nineteen of Pekah = two years of Azariah + fifteen of Jotham + eleven of Ahaz.]

3. The grounds of this comparatively lenient estimate of Hoshea do not appear.

[1] Winckler has now withdrawn his own solution in favour of that of Kittel (see below; cf. *KAT*^{3}, p. 268).

3 that were before him. [KI] Against him came up
Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his
4 servant, and brought him presents. And the king of
Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent
messengers to So king of Egypt, and offered no present
to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year:
therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound
5 him in prison. Then the king of Assyria came up
throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and
6 besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea,

xvii. 3-6. *The Captivity of Israel.*

3. became his servant: or, 'made submission to him.' If the reference be to the invasion of 724, we must suppose that Hoshea went in person to meet Shalmaneser, and tendered his submission in the usual manner by paying tribute. The question is whether the phrase necessarily implies that the submission was accepted. That is certainly the natural implication; and it might fairly enough be urged that any other exegesis unduly strains the language. If so, the attempt to maintain the unity of the passage will have to be abandoned.

4. shut him up: or, 'detained him in custody,' as the word may very well signify (*lit.* 'hindered him'). We may assume, that is, that instead of reinstating Hoshea and releasing him, Shalmaneser holds an investigation into his past conduct; and, finding him to have been in correspondence with the king of Egypt, keeps him a prisoner, and determines to reduce the kingdom to a province of the Assyrian empire.

So should probably read *Sevè* (Assyrian, *Shab'i*). He has commonly been identified with Sabako, the Ethiopian founder of the twenty-fifth dynasty; but this is disputed by Assyriologists, who hold him to have been either one of the petty kings of the Nile Delta (Schrader), or the general of the north-Arabian king of Muṣri (Winckler).

5. Resuming his march, Shalmaneser advances to Samaria; and the army besieges it for three years, he himself having died before its capture (see above).

6. In the ninth year. The chronological difficulty referred to above need not cause much embarrassment. Since Hoshea became king in 732, his nine years' reign would, as a matter of fact, come to an end in 724, two years before the fall of the city. The statement in the text would thus rest on a natural miscalculation of the compiler. Nor is there anything incredible in the

the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away unto Assyria, and placed them in Halah, and in Habor, *on* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. [D²] And it was so, because the children of 7

supposition that the capital offered a strenuous resistance after the arrest of the king.

took Samaria. The following are the words of Sargon's inscription: 'Samaria I besieged and captured; 27,290 of its inhabitants I carried away; fifty chariots I collected from them; the rest I allowed to keep their property; I set my governor over them, and imposed the tribute of the former king upon them' (*COT*, *ad loc.*). The captives were deported to Northern Mesopotamia and Media.

Habor [on] **the river of Gozan** is the modern *Ḥabūr* (Chaboras of the Greeks), a northern affluent of the Euphrates, entering it about the latitude of Hamath on the Orontes.

Gozan (Assyrian, *Guzanu*) seems to have been a province on the upper waters of that river, west of Nisibis.

Halah (which the LXX takes to have been a river) is less securely identified; though a country called *Ḥalaḥḥu*, near Haran, would suit the conditions (see *COT*). If the LXX were right in taking Halah as a river, a conjecture of Winckler's would deserve consideration—that the name is a mistake for *Baliḥ*, the next tributary of the Euphrates west of the Habur.

xvii. 7–23. *Review of the History of the Northern Kingdom.*

The final extinction of the Northern Israel—the larger and more important section of Yahweh's ancient people—was an event that could not fail to make a deep impression on all thoughtful readers of the national history; and the editor is naturally led into a series of reflections on the religious significance of that great catastrophe. He shows it to have been the inevitable consequence of persistent apostasy from Yahweh, and provocation of Him by a gradual assimilation of the worst features of the surrounding heathenism. The stages of this declension are enumerated nearly in historical order: first the adoption of the Canaanite high places with their idolatrous emblems, leading to the worship of images; then, in defiance of all the warnings of Yahweh through the prophets, the introduction of foreign religions, the astral worship of Babylonia, the cult of the Phoenician Baal, and the sacrifice of children to Molech. Finally, emphasis is laid on the evil influence of Jeroboam I, who had established the worship of the golden calves as the religion of the state.

This epilogue cannot as a whole have been written before the Exile, for in verses 19, 20 not only is Judah involved in the

Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared
8 other gods, and walked in the statutes of the nations, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of
9 Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they made. And the children of Israel did secretly things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the
10 watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up pillars and Asherim upon every high hill, and under
11 every green tree: and there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the nations whom the LORD carried

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condemnation of Israel, but the captivity of the whole nation is looked back on as an accomplished fact. The survey includes religious sins which were not prominent in Israel (host of heaven, human sacrifice), but were eminently characteristic of the southern kingdom in the seventh century. The style, moreover, is peculiar, being strongly coloured by the phraseology of Jeremiah (see Driver, *Introd.*[6] p. 203). These are indications that the passage is mainly the work of the younger Deuteronomic editor, who wrote during or after the Exile. The hand of the original compiler—the author of the framework—is perhaps to be recognized in verses 21–23 (which fit in badly with the context), where the fall of Israel is traced to the one sin on which that writer has most insisted - the calf-worship of Jeroboam I. (So Stade; Kittel assigns verse 18 also to the original compiler.)

7. And it was so, because. Strictly, 'And because,' introducing a long protasis of which the apodosis would not be reached till verse 18. But such a construction is un-Hebraic; and it is much better to read, with LXX (L): 'And the wrath of Yahweh was on Israel, because.'

9. did secretly: Heb. 'concealed.' The text is doubtful. Perhaps it should be altered to 'devised' (Klostermann).

from the tower . . . city: apparently a proverbial expression denoting everything that could be called a city: but see xviii. 8.

10. On **pillars and Asherim** see on 1 Kings xiv. 23.

upon every high hill, &c.: cf. xvi. 4; Jer. ii. 20, iii. 6, 13.

11. burnt incense: 'sacrificed.'

away before them ; and wrought wicked things to provoke
the LORD to anger : and they served idols, whereof the 12
LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.
Yet the LORD testified unto Israel, and unto Judah, by 13
the hand of every prophet, and of every seer, saying,
Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments
and my statutes, according to all the law which I com-
manded your fathers, and which I sent to you by the
hand of my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding 14
they would not hear, but hardened their neck, like to
the neck of their fathers, who believed not in the LORD
their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his 15
covenant that he made with their fathers, and his
testimonies which he testified unto them ; and they
followed vanity, and became vain, and *went* after the
nations that were round about them, concerning whom
the LORD had charged them that they should not do like
them. And they forsook all the commandments of the 16
LORD their God, and made them molten images, even
two calves, and made an Asherah, and worshipped all
the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused 17
their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire,
and used divination and enchantments, and sold them-
selves to do that which was evil in the sight of the LORD,
to provoke him to anger. [D] Therefore the LORD was 18

13. Cf. the phrases with Jer. vii. 25, xi. 7, xviii. 11, xxv. 4 f., xxxv. 15, xxxvi. 3, 7.

and of every seer is perhaps an explanatory gloss.

14. would not hear: Jer. vii. 26, xi. 8, &c.

hardened their neck: Deut. x. 16 ; Jer. vii. 26, xvii. 23, xix. 15.

15. followed vanity . . . vain: Jer. ii. 5.

16. even two calves is a reader's gloss, unduly restricting the reference of the preceding word ('molten images').

all the host of heaven. See later on xxi. 3.

17. caused their sons . . . See on xvi. 3.

very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.
19 [D²] Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel
20 which they made. And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.
21 [D] For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and
22 made them sin a great sin. And the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they
23 departed not from them; until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he spake by the hand of all his servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away out of their own land to Assyria, unto this day.

24 [KI] And the king of Assyria brought men from

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18. the tribe of Judah only. See on 1 Kings xii. 20.

19, 20 are evidently a later comment on verse 18, of which verse verses 21–23 are perhaps the natural sequel. If Kittel be right in thinking that verse 18 is part of the original pre-Exilic epilogue, there is no reason to doubt that verses 19 f. are by the same author as verses 7–17.

21–23 give a new and simpler account of the reasons of Israel's fall: viz. that from the time it became a separate kingdom its public religion had been vitiated by the **great sin** of calf-worship into which Jeroboam I had led it. This harmonizes so completely with the compiler's reiterated condemnation of the offence as to make it highly probable that the verses were written by him.

xvii. 24-41. *The Origin of the Samaritans.*

In accordance with the policy of the later Assyrian kings Sargon repeopled the subjugated province with captives from distant parts of his empire. The new colonists found the country infested with lions, and concluded that they had incurred the displeasure of the local deity, of whose religion they were naturally ignorant. The king of Assyria accordingly sent them one of the exiled Israelitish priests, who took up his residence in Beth-el, and instructed them

Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Avva, and from Hamath and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities

in the traditional worship of Yahweh. They at the same time continued their ancestral heathen rites, and transformed the ancient high places into sanctuaries of the various gods they had been accustomed to worship. Out of this mixture of races and religions arose the later Samaritan community, which caused so much trouble to the Jews after their return from Exile.

Recent critics (Stade, &c.) distinguish three strata in the narrative: (*a*) verses 24-28, an account of the repopulation of the land, supposed to be taken from an ancient source, probably the chronicles of the kingdom of Israel. To this verse 41 is taken to be the editorial conclusion. (*b*) Verses 29-34^{a}, an enumeration of the deities worshipped by the colonists, assigned to the younger Deuteronomist. (*c*) Verses 34^{b}-40 are plainly a late addition, which has indeed no explicit reference to the Samaritans at all. The grounds for separating (*a*) and (*b*), as the work of different authors, are however not very cogent.

xvii. 24–28. *The Foreign Colonists in Samaria.* Winckler has tried to show that the incident belongs to the reign of Asshurbanipal (668–626), on the ground mainly that Sargon took no captives from Babylonia, whereas Asshurbanipal expressly mentions Babylon, Cutha, and Sippar, as cities subdued by him (c. 648), although he says also that he allowed their inhabitants to remain in Babylonia (*KIB*, p. 193). This view is not inconsistent with the terms of the passage before us; and it derives some confirmation from Ezra iv. 10, where the Samaritans trace their foundation to 'the great and noble Osnappar' (i. e. Asshurbanipal). But in verse 2 of the same chapter they trace their ancestry to Esarhaddon. It would appear, therefore, that the colonization of Samaria was effected by successive stages under different Assyrian kings; and Sargon's own inscriptions contain several references to the settlement of captives in *Bit Humri* or Samaria (see *COT*, p. 276 ff.).

24. The **king of Assyria** would naturally be Sargon, the conqueror of Samaria; but there is no difficulty in supposing that the narrative belongs to a later time, and that Asshurbanipal is to be understood.

Cuthah or **Cuth** (verse 30), one of the most ancient cities of Babylonia, is identified with *Tell Ibrāhīm*, north-east of Babylon. The Babylonian name is *Kutu*. In later times the Samaritans were called 'Cuthaeans' by the Jews.

Avva is the same as 'Ivvah (xix. 13), and, though unknown, was probably a Syrian city, like

Hamath, on the Orontes (see on 1 Kings viii. 65).

of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they
25 possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. And
so it was, at the beginning of their dwelling there, that
they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent lions
26 among them, which killed some of them. Wherefore
they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations
which thou hast carried away, and placed in the cities of
Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land:
therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold,
they slay them, because they know not the manner of
27 the God of the land. Then the king of Assyria com-
manded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom
ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell
there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of
28 the land. So one of the priests whom they had carried
away from Samaria came and dwelt in Beth-el, and
29 taught them how they should fear the LORD. [D² ?] How-

Sepharvaim is also mentioned in xix. 13 (cf. xviii. 34), along with Hamath and 'Ivvah, whence it has been concluded that it too must have been a city of Syria, perhaps the *Shabarain* conquered by Shalmaneser IV (cf. *Sibraim* in Ezek. xlvii. 16). More probably in this passage it is the Babylonian *Sippara*, midway between the Euphrates and the Tigris, north-west of Kutu. Winckler argues that a transportation of Syrians to Palestine is unlikely, on account of the proximity of the two countries; and considers that Hamath and 'Avva have been inserted by mistake from xix. 13. There then remain Babylon, Cuthah, and Sippara, three neighbouring cities of Babylonia, mentioned together in the annals of Asshurbanipal (see above).

26. the manner of the God of the land: the customs by which intercourse with the local deity was regulated. In ancient Semitic religion, not only had each land its own god, but each god had his own ceremonial code, which had to be observed by his worshippers (cf. 1 Kings xx. 23).

27. whom ye brought: better, as LXX (L), 'whom I carried away.' The two following verbs should probably be changed to the singular.

28. taught them how they should fear. Cf. Isaiah's description

beit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the 30 men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, and the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, 31 and the Sepharvites burnt their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. So they feared the LORD, and made unto them from 32 among themselves priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after 33 the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away. Unto this day they do after the 34 former manners: [Z] they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law or after the commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel; with whom the LORD had made a covenant, and 35 charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor

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of the conventional religion of his time (xxix. 13): 'Their fear of me is a human tradition learned by rote.'

xvii. 29–34ª. *The Foreign Cults of Samaria.*

30. Succoth-benoth. This name has not been explained. The first part is possibly that of a Babylonian deity *Sakkuth* (see the Commentaries on Amos v. 26); the second has been supposed to be a form of *Bānītu*, a title of the goddess Istar.

Nergal, a war-god in the Babylonian pantheon, also the god of the nether-world, is known to have been the tutelary deity of the city of Kutu (*COT*, p. 283). The remaining Divine names are altogether obscure.

32. sacrificed: *lit.* 'acted,' i. e. 'officiated.'

xvii. 34ᵇ–40. *Further Condemnation of the Northern People.* The passage has no obvious connexion with what immediately precedes. The opening words, 'They fear not the Lord,' are in direct opposition to verses 32, 33, 41; and there is hardly anything

bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to
36 them: but the LORD, who brought you up out of the
land of Egypt with great power and with a stretched out
arm, him shall ye fear, and unto him shall ye bow your-
37 selves, and to him shall ye sacrifice: and the statutes
and the ordinances, and the law and the commandment,
which he wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for ever-
38 more; and ye shall not fear other gods: and the
covenant that I have made with you ye shall not forget;
39 neither shall ye fear other gods: but the LORD your God
shall ye fear; and he shall deliver you out of the hand
40 of all your enemies. Howbeit they did not hearken, but
41 they did after their former manner. [D?] So these
nations feared the LORD, and served their graven
images; their children likewise, and their children's
children, as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.

18 [D] Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea

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from beginning to end to show whether the writer has the Samaritans in view. He goes back on the whole history of the northern kingdom, and supplements the indictment of verses 7–23.

xvii. 41 is a note either of the compiler, or of another editor. **unto this day**: cf. verse 34[a].

xviii–xxv. HISTORY OF JUDAH ALONE.

xviii–xx. *Hezekiah and Isaiah.* (Cf. 2 Chron. xxix–xxxii.)

For the history of Hezekiah the compiler had at his disposal an important prophetical work, which enabled him to supplement the bare chronicle of current events supplied by his annalistic authorities. This was a biography of the great contemporary prophet Isaiah, similar in general character to the prophetic narratives of Elijah and Elisha which enrich the history of the northern kingdom. To this source we owe the whole of the section xviii. 17—xx. 19, which relates three incidents, in each of which Isaiah plays a conspicuous part. Since this passage is reproduced without material variation in the Book of Isaiah (ch. xxxvi–xxxix), it was a natural conjecture that it was

son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz
king of Judah began to reign. Twenty and five years 2
old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned
twenty and nine years in Jerusalem: and his mother's
name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. And he did 3
that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, according
to all that David his father had done. He removed the 4

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written by Isaiah himself, and had been copied from his pages by the compiler of Kings. A comparison of the two texts, however, proves that on the contrary the editor of the Book of Isaiah found the narrative in the Book of Kings, and transferred it thence to his own work (see Driver, *Introd.*[6] p. 226 f.). There are, besides, insurmountable historical and literary objections to the theory that the author was Isaiah himself. It is equally certain that the passage is not the composition of the compiler of Kings, but was borrowed by him from an older writing, which may perhaps be identified with the 'Vision of Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz' referred to in 2 Chron. xxxii. 32.

The record of the reign falls into the following divisions: (1) The introduction, including notices of Hezekiah's reforms in the public religion, and his conquest of Philistine territory, xviii. 1–8; (2) a second account of the fall of Samaria, xviii. 9–12; (3) narratives of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, xviii. 13—xix. 37; (4) Hezekiah's sickness and recovery, xx. 1–11; (5) embassy of Merodach-baladan, xx. 12–19; and (6) conclusion, xx. 20, 21.

xviii. 1–8. *Introduction.* The reign of Hezekiah was memorable for the first attempt at a thorough reformation of the cultus, by the suppression of the provincial sanctuaries and the destruction of idolatrous emblems (verse 4). The accuracy of this statement has been widely disputed, but on grounds which seem very insufficient. The notice gives no indication of the period of the reign when the work was undertaken. There is much probability in the view that it took place after the Assyrian invasion of 701, and in consequence of the signal deliverance which Jerusalem, alone of the fenced cities of Judah, then experienced (see W. R. Smith, *Prophets*[2], pp. 359–364). That it was due largely to the influence of Isaiah on the king can hardly be doubted.

1. The synchronism is not in agreement with xvi. 1. It was probably arrived at by reckoning backwards from the data of xviii. 9: the sixth year of Hezekiah being the ninth of Hoshea, his first (complete) year would be the fourth of that king, so that his reign would commence in the third of Hoshea.

2. For **Abi**, read 'Abijah,' as 2 Chron. xxix. 1.

high places, and brake the pillars, and cut down the Asherah: and he brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan.
5 He trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor
6 *among them* that were before him. For he clave to the LORD, he departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses.
7 And the LORD was with him; whithersoever he went forth he prospered: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria,
8 and served him not. He smote the Philistines unto Gaza and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

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4. The word **Asherah** should probably be plural, as in LXX. See further on 1 Kings xiv. 23.

the brasen serpent that Moses had made: cf. Num. xxi. 9.

and he called it: better, as marg., 'and it was called.' Either rendering is defensible, but a statement regarding the real name of the idol is much more to be expected than one as to what Hezekiah called it in the act of destroying it. Only, in this case we must not take the name **Nehushtan** as a diminutive of contempt (= 'piece of brass'). It is not at all certain that the word is a derivative of *nehōsheth* (brass), although the Massoretes understood it so. More probably it is connected with the word *nāḥāsh* (meaning 'serpent'). Nöldeke considers it a compound of this word with *tan* (dragon); while Klostermann takes the latter element of the compound to be *yathan*, and explains the name as 'primaeval serpent.'

burn incense: 'sacrifice.' We have here an interesting proof of the persistence of serpent-worship in Israel down to this comparatively late date. That the idol stood in the temple and was an emblem of Yahweh, as is often assumed, is not stated.

7. he rebelled: anticipating the fuller account in verses 13 ff.

8. This Philistine campaign may also belong to the latter half of Hezekiah's reign. In 701 Sennacherib assigned a portion of Judaean territory to his faithful vassal the king of Gaza; and it is not improbable that the re-conquest of this territory was the occasion of the struggle which ended in the defeat of Gaza.

from the tower: cf. xvii. 9.

[KJ] And it came to pass in the fourth year of king 9
Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of
Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria
came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the 10
end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of
Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of
Israel, Samaria was taken. And the king of Assyria 11
carried Israel away unto Assyria, and put them in Halah,
and in Habor, *on* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of
the Medes: [D] because they obeyed not the voice of 12
the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, even
all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and
would not hear it, nor do it.

[KJ] Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did 13

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xviii. 9–12. *The Fall of Samaria.* Verses 9–11 are almost identical with xvii. 5, 6, and may possibly be an extract from the annals of Judah, which was repeated in the account of the northern kingdom: see on xvii. 3–6 above. The dates, however, must have been added by the compiler; we have already seen that they are historically incorrect so far as Hoshea is concerned, and it is doubtful if they are reliable as regards Hezekiah. They are certainly irreconcileable with xviii. 13; for if 722 (the year of Samaria's fall) was the sixth of Hezekiah, his fourteenth year cannot have been 701 (the year of Sennacherib's invasion). How to adjust this important discrepancy is one of the standing problems of the chronology of Kings (see on verse 13; and Introd., p. 42 ff.).

xviii. 13–xix. 37. *Sennacherib's Campaign.* (Cf. Isa. xxxvi, xxxvii.)

The passage is divided by recent critics into three independent narratives, of which the first (A) was added by the compiler of Kings, while the other two (B and C) were perhaps found by him already amalgamated in the prophetical document (see above, p. 382) which he used as a source.

(A) Ch. xviii. 13 16 is an annalistic account of the invasion, obviously of the same character as verses 9–11 and many other notices which we have assigned to the royal annals. It has long been recognized that verses 14–16, which are not found in Isa. xxxvi, are distinct in origin from the rest of the section; but it is impossible to separate verse 13 from verses 14–16; and the

Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the
14 fenced cities of Judah, and took them. And Hezekiah

omission of the latter by the editor of Isaiah is simply a proof that he borrowed from the Book of Kings, and left out an incident which had no immediate bearing on the life of the prophet. An external mark of the diversity of sources is found in the spelling of the name Hezekiah (in 13–16, *Ḥizḳiyyāh* : in 17 ff. *Ḥizḳiyyāhû*).

(B) The second narrative begins at xviii. 17 and ends either with xix. 8 or xix. 9[a]. It describes with great fullness an attempt of Sennacherib to obtain the surrender of Jerusalem by threats and cajolery, backed by some display of force. The summons was refused on the advice of Isaiah, who predicted that Sennacherib would hear a rumour that would cause him to return to his own land. The question whether this 'rumour' refers to the advance of Tirhakah, or to something else not mentioned, determines whether xix. 9[a] belongs to this narrative or the following. On either view, the conclusion of the one and the beginning of the other will have been removed in the process of amalgamation.

(C) In the third narrative, xix. 9 (or 9[b])–35, we read of a threatening letter sent to Hezekiah by Sennacherib with the same object of inducing him to surrender. Again Isaiah encourages him to resistance by an announcement that the king of Assyria would not invest the city, but would return 'by the way that he came.' Then follows (verses 36, 37) the account of the outbreak of pestilence in the Assyrian camp, the retreat of Sennacherib, and his subsequent assassination at Nineveh (681 B.C.). These verses may be the conclusion of (B).

In order to assign their proper historical place and value to these three narratives, it would be necessary to compare them closely with the Assyrian accounts of the campaign, which may be summarized as follows (see *COT*, p. 286 ff., *KIB*, ii. p. 95 ff., and Burney, p. 377 ff.). In his third campaign (701 B.C.) Sennacherib marched against the Western Syrian states, which had been in rebellion since the death of Sargon (705). After subduing Phoenicia, he proceeded southward to the Philistine country, where he encountered a stubborn but ineffectual resistance. After most of their strongholds had been reduced, he met and defeated at Eltekeh (*Altaḳu*) a large army which the 'kings of Egypt and the king of Meluḥḥa' had brought to the assistance of their allies. The remaining cities were then captured, the last to fall being Ekron, and Sennacherib was now free to turn his attention to Hezekiah of Judah, the leading member of the confederacy. Forty-six of his fortresses were taken, Jerusalem was blockaded (though not regularly besieged), the devastated territory was apportioned to various Philistine vassals; when at last Hezekiah, 'overwhelmed

king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which

by fear,' made his submission, and paid as tribute 30 talents in gold and 800 in silver, which Sennacherib caused to be sent after him to Nineveh. The circumstances which led to his return to Nineveh are not stated.

1. Now, the first thing that strikes us here is the close correspondence between the latter part o. the Assyrian record and the account of (A). There is no item of difference between them for which it would not be easy to suggest an explanation. Even if we suppose the former to mean that Hezekiah sent his tribute direct to Nineveh (which is not at all a necessary conclusion), there would still be no discrepancy; for (A) simply states that Hezekiah made the offer of submission while Sennacherib was in Lachish, but says nothing about the time when the tribute was actually paid. It is important to observe that if we assume the order of Sennacherib's account to be in the main chronological, Hezekiah's submission was subsequent to the battle of Eltekeh, when all hope of succour from Egypt was taken away.

2. The narrative of (B), on the other hand, presents no single point of contact with the cuneiform record. It is tempting at first sight to suppose that the expedition under the Rabshakeh is identical with the blockading corps referred to by Sennacherib, and therefore preceded the submission of Hezekiah. This, however, is inconsistent with the sense of the biblical narrative, which plainly implies that Hezekiah never yielded to this demand for the surrender of his capital. Again, it has been thought that the approach of Tirhakah (xix. 9) corresponds to the advance of the Egyptian army that was defeated at Eltekeh; but the suggestion only adds to the difficulty of the problem, and is itself irreconcileable with the language of Sennacherib[1]. We seem, therefore, shut up to the conclusion that (B) describes an incident regarding which the Assyrian annals are absolutely silent, and belonging to a subsequent stage of the campaign. The demand for the surrender of Jerusalem which Hezekiah successfully resisted must be explained as an afterthought on the part of Sennacherib, the motive for which would be found in the rumoured advance of Tirhakah, if xix. 9[a] belongs to this document (see below).

[1] It rested on the identification (now generally abandoned by Assyriologists) of *Meluḫḫa* (really Western Arabia) with Ethiopia. Sennacherib's account distinctly subordinates the king of Meluḫḫa to the kings of Egypt, which would be impossible if he meant Tirhakah, the supposed over-lord of Egypt.

thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred
15 talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave *him* all the silver that was found in the house of
16 the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house. At

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3. With regard to (C), there are two questions: (*a*) Did the original narrative belong to the campaign of 701 at all, or to some later expedition of Sennacherib, in which Jerusalem was again threatened? The latter opinion is ably maintained by Winckler (and accepted by Benzinger), but the evidence appears insufficient to justify so radical a departure from what was admittedly the Hebrew tradition[1]. (*b*) Assuming that (B) and (C) both refer to the year 701, do they describe two successive incidents of that campaign, or are they parallel accounts following different traditions of the same event? The second alternative commends itself to most recent writers (since Stade, 1886), and is here adopted.

xviii. 13–16. *The Annalistic Account.*

13. in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah: implying that his accession was in the year 714. The statement has even less claim to be traditional than verse 9 f., for it is probably a calculation based on xx. 6, and on the assumption that the sickness of Hezekiah happened in the same year as the Assyrian invasion.

14. to Lachish: the most important Judaean fortress in the Shephelah; see on xiv. 19. The siege of Lachish is depicted on a bas-relief of Sennacherib (*COT*, p. 287).

I have offended: *lit.* 'I have sinned.' Sennacherib uses the same word of the disaffection of the Ekronites at this time.

that which thou puttest on me: cf. again Sennacherib: 'To the former tribute . . . I added the tribute befitting my lordship, *and laid it upon him.*'

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[1] Winckler's chief arguments against assigning C to 701 are: (1) The retreat of Sennacherib is ascribed here to a pestilence, whereas in B it is ascribed to a 'rumour'; Winckler explains this as the rumour of a revolt in Babylon which engrossed Sennacherib's attention in the following year. (2) The narrative gives the impression that the death of Sennacherib occurred shortly after his return to Nineveh, whereas it did not take place till 681. (This argument of course falls to the ground if xix. 36f. are assigned to B.) (3) Tirhakah did not become king of Egypt till 691. (The evidence for this assertion seems incomplete.) Winckler accordingly connects xix. 9[a] with C, and brings the events down to a time between 691 and 681.

that time did Hezekiah cut off *the gold from* the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from* the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria. [I] And the king of Assyria sent Tartan 17
and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great army unto Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the high way of the fuller's field. And when they had called to the king, there came out 18
to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebnah the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder. And Rabshakeh said unto them, 19

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16. which Hezekiah . . . overlaid. Should it be 'Solomon'?

xviii. 17—xix. 9[a]. *First Prophetic Narrative.* We take it to have been after the submission of Hezekiah, and in consequence of another threatened attack from Egypt, that Sennacherib sent a detachment of his army to Jerusalem under the Rabshakeh and other officers. The object of the demonstration was to obtain possession of the city, partly by a display of force, and partly by incitements to the populace to rebel against their king. Hezekiah, in deep distress, sends a deputation to the prophet Isaiah, who gives a reassuring answer, predicting a speedy withdrawal of the invaders, and the death of the king of Assyria. The Rabshakeh returns to his master at Libnah; and soon after Sennacherib hears a rumour of the approach of Tirhakah the Ethiopian. Here the first narrative is broken off.

17. Of the three Assyrian officers mentioned here, Isa. xxxvi. 2 names only the **Rabshakeh** (so xix. 8). This title is said to mean 'Chief of the Officers.' The **Tartan** was the commander-in-chief (Isa. xx. 1). **Rabsaris** ought to mean 'Chief of the Eunuchs,' but the word has not been found in Assyrian.

the conduit . . . &c.: cf. Isa. vii. 3. The spot cannot be certainly located, but must have been within earshot of the wall. For the various conjectures, see the Commentaries on Isaiah.

18. On **Eliakim** and **Shebnah**, cf. Isa. xxii. 15 ff. On the three offices, see 1 Kings iv. 1 ff.

19. The speech of the Rabshakeh discusses two possible grounds of confidence which might be in the minds of Hezekiah and his

Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou
20 trustest? Thou sayest, but they are but vain words, *There is* counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou hast rebelled against me?
21 Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt
22 unto all that trust on him. But if ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: is not that he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship
23 before this altar in Jerusalem? Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on
24 thy part to set riders upon them. How then canst thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my

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advisers: expectation of help from Egypt, and faith in the power of Yahweh.

20. Render, 'Thou thinkest that a mere word of the lips is counsel and strength for war!'—referring (probably) to the empty promises of the Egyptians.

21. For the idea, cf. Isa. xxx. 1–5; for the expression, Ezek. xxix. 6, 7.

22. Cf. verse 4. The argument is a somewhat singular one in the mouth of a heathen soldier, and if really used by him would show how closely the Assyrians watched the internal affairs of the nations within their sphere of influence. The speech, however, is a free composition of the narrator; and only proves that in his view the reformation of Hezekiah was accomplished before 701. At the same time, the verse certainly affords independent evidence that such a reformation actually took place.

23. give pledges to: better, as marg., 'make a wager with.' Want of cavalry was the weak point in the armament of Judah at this time (verse 24; Isa. xxx. 16, xxxi. 1, 3).

24. The word for **captain** (strictly 'governor' of a province) is here both unsuitable and grammatically harsh: it should probably be deleted as a gloss.

master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? Am I now come up without the 25
LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it. Then 26
said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebnah, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it: and speak not with us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall. But Rabshakeh said unto them, 27
Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men which sit on the wall, to eat their own dung, and to drink their own water with you? Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried 28
with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear ye the word of the great king, the king of Assyria. Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for 29
he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand: neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, 30
The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Hearken 31

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and put thy trust: better perhaps, 'seeing thou hast put thy trust.' But the sequence is difficult.

25. The Assyrian represents himself as commissioned by Yahweh to avenge the destruction of his sanctuaries. A precisely similar sentiment was expressed by Cyrus in connexion with his conquest of Babylon. That the words embody no serious conviction is clear from verse 35.

26. Syrian, or 'Aramaic,' was the language of commerce and diplomacy in Western Asia, though not yet understood by the common people. Hebrew is called **Jewish** in only one other (post-Exilic) passage, Neh. xiii. 24.

27. to eat . . . The words, of course, express not the desire or intention of the king of Assyria (observe the antithesis in verse 31), but the inevitable result of fidelity to Hezekiah's ruinous policy.

29. out of his hand must either be read 'out of my hand' (so LXX (L), &c.), or omitted entirely, as in Isa. xxxvi. 14.

not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria,
Make your peace with me, and come out to me; and eat
ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree,
and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern;
32 until I come and take you away to a land like your own
land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vine-
yards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live,
and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he
33 persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath
any of the gods of the nations ever delivered his land
34 out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the
gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of
Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah? have they delivered
35 Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the
gods of the countries, that have delivered their country
out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem
36 out of my hand? But the people held their peace, and
answered him not a word: for the king's commandment
37 was, saying, Answer him not. Then came Eliakim the
son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and

31. Make your peace with me: *lit.* as marg. 'Make with me a blessing.' The phrase is not found elsewhere, and is not easy to explain.

come out to me: the regular expression for surrendering a city (1 Sam. xi. 3; Jer. xxi. 9, &c.).

and eat ye: 'that ye may eat,' by resuming the cultivation of your fields and vineyards.

32. The Rabshakeh is very honest: he does not conceal from them that their ultimate fate will be deportation.

34. On **Hamath, Sepharvaim,** and **Ivvah,** see xvii. 24. Sepharvaim must here be a Syrian city, and also **Hena,** of which nothing is known.

Arpad is now *Tell 'Erfād*, near Aleppo. The conquests must have been all recent, since the time of Tiglath-pileser: Hamath fell in 720, Arpad about 740.

have they delivered Samaria. It is quite necessary here to restore a clause preserved in LXX (L), and read: 'Where are the gods of the land of Samaria? Have they delivered?' &c.

Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

19 And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. 2 And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. 3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of contumely: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. 4 It may be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left. 5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah. 6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words

xix. **1. went into the house of the LORD.** See verse 14. Cf. 1 Kings viii. 33, 34.

2. unto Isaiah. Isaiah had for years been straining all his influence to avert the suicidal policy of rebellion against Assyria; but his counsels had been overborne by the war-party in the court. The hour of his vindication has come, when a deputation, including one of his bitterest opponents (Shebna: Isa. xxii. 15 ff.), waits upon him from the king, beseeching his intercession and advice.

3. of trouble . . . contumely: better, 'of distress and punishment and rejection.'

the children are come: obviously a proverbial figure for a dangerous crisis which there is no strength to meet: cf. Hos. xiii. 13; Isa. lxvi. 9.

4. the LORD thy God. The prophet stands nearer to God than other men; hence his intercession may be efficacious when the prayers of worldly men are of no avail.

6. Isaiah has his answer ready, having already received a revelation from Yahweh.

that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king
7 of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will put
a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall
return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by
the sword in his own land.
8 So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria
warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was
9 departed from Lachish. And when he heard say of
Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to
fight against thee: [I²] he sent messengers again unto

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the servants: *lit.* 'the young men,' as 1 Kings xx. 14.

7. put a spirit in him: a spirit of craven fear, depriving him of his natural resolution and courage. How the spirit will work is explained by what follows, **he shall hear a rumour.** The rumour is no doubt that of the approach of Tirhakah (verse 9). It is certainly remarkable that there is no allusion to the pestilence by which Sennacherib's enterprise was shattered.

8. On **Libnah,** see viii. 22. The neighbouring Lachish had apparently capitulated in the interval.

9ª. Tirhakah (Assyrian, *Tarḳu*) is mentioned only here (and Isa. xxxvii. 9) in the O. T. The difficulty as to the year of his accession (see p. 388 above) still awaits final solution; but it is to be observed that he is not here called 'king of Egypt,' and the event may very well have preceded the establishment of his definite suzerainty in the Nile valley. It may be held, at all events provisionally, that he was a power in the background acting in concert with the Egyptian princes; and that after the defeat of his allies at Eltekeh he prepared himself for a struggle with the Assyrian.

xix. 9ᵇ-35. *Second Prophetic Narrative.* This account differs from the first chiefly in these particulars: (1) Sennacherib's demand is conveyed by a letter, and is not backed by military force. (2) Isaiah's interposition is spontaneous. (3) His message to the king is different, both in form and substance. It consists, indeed, of two distinct oracles; one (verses 21–28) being a metrical composition in what is commonly called the elegiac measure; and the other (verses 32–34), a short prophetic utterance, in ordinary prose style. The intervening verses (29–31), though also in prose, are an appendix to the poetical passage. Since verses 32–34 contain the direct answer to Hezekiah's prayer, and are the natural continuation of verse 20, it is almost

Hezekiah, saying, Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king 10
of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest
deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into
the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, thou hast 11
heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands,
by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered?
Have the gods of the nations delivered them, which my 12
fathers have destroyed, Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph,
and the children of Eden which were in Telassar? Where 13
is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the
king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah?
And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the 14
messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto
the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

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certain that verses 21–31 are an insertion from an unknown independent source.

9ᵇ. he sent messengers again. The word represented by 'again' does not appear in the corresponding verse in Isaiah, where it is replaced by 'And he heard.' Both words are doubtless editorial insertions to connect this narrative with the preceding, the original text having been simply 'And he sent messengers.' The narrative on which we are entering has been, of course, abridged by omission of the introduction.

10. Thus shall ye speak . . . saying. The clause is omitted by the LXX, and the direction appears superfluous: though it is not impossible that the letter (verse 14) was accompanied by an oral message.

12, 13. Most of the names here mentioned have already occurred: see xvii. 6, 24, xviii. 33 f. **Haran** (Gen. xi. 31, &c.) was the great commercial emporium of Northern Mesopotamia; it was situated on the Balih, a northern tributary of the Euphrates (see on xvii. 6). **Rezeph** (Assyrian, *Raṣṣappa*, now *Ruṣâfe*) lies south of the Euphrates on the road from Haran to Palmyra. **Eden** is the small kingdom called *Bît 'Adini*, on the upper Euphrates; and **Telassar**, apparently one of its cities, though not certainly identified. The whole of these provinces had long been incorporated in the Assyrian empire.

14. spread it before the LORD: that Yahweh might see, and take notice of its blasphemous arrogance.

15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O
LORD, the God of Israel, that sittest upon the cherubim,
thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms
16 of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline
thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD,
and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, wherewith
17 he hath sent him to reproach the living God. Of a truth,
LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations
18 and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire:
for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands,
wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them.
19 Now therefore, O LORD our God, save thou us, I beseech
thee, out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth
may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.
20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying,
Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Whereas thou
hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria,

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15. sittest (enthroned) **upon** (or, 'over') **the cherubim.** Whatever the original idea of the cherubim may have been (see p. 113), the reference here is merely to the two figures in the inner shrine of the temple. Cf. 1 Sam. iv. 4; 2 Sam. vi. 2; Ps. lxxx. 2, xcix. 1.

16. hath sent him. Omit 'him' with Isa. xxxvii. 17. The clause seems to be borrowed from verse 4.

17. have laid waste. It is better to read 'have devoted them,' as in verse 11 (marg.). The two Hebrew verbs differ but in a single letter, and the one here found is hardly ever used of nations.

18. wood and stone: cf. Deut. iv. 28, xxviii. 36, 64, xxix. 17, &c.

19. Let Yahweh now show, in contrast with the deities of the heathen, that he alone possesses true Godhead! The last clause is better rendered: 'that thou, Yahweh, art God alone.'

20. The answer to the prayer comes in the form of a message from Isaiah. The verse was originally the protasis to verse 32, though the construction is now obscured by the addition of the words **I have heard** thee, which are not in Isaiah, and should be omitted.

I have heard *thee*. [?] This is the word that the LORD 21
hath spoken concerning him: The virgin daughter of
Zion hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn; the
daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.
Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and 22
against whom hast thou exalted thy voice and lifted up
thine eyes on high? *even* against the Holy One of Israel.
By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and 23
hast said, With the multitude of my chariots am I come
up to the height of the mountains, to the innermost parts
of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof,
and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into his
farthest lodging place, the forest of his fruitful field.
I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the 24
sole of my feet will I dry up all the rivers of Egypt.
Hast thou not heard how I have done it long ago, and 25
formed it of ancient times? now have I brought it to
pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities

21[b] commences the poetic oracle, which is a taunt-song over the ignominious defeat of the Assyrian. The so-called elegiac rhythm, which can be traced to the end of verse 28, consists in the alternation of longer and shorter lines, generally in the proportion of three pulses to two, thus:

'She mócks thee, she púts thee to scórn—the vírgin of Zíon;
Behínd thee sháking her heád —Jerúsalem's daúghter.'

shaken her head: a gesture of derision; Ps. xxii. 7, cix. 25; Jer. xviii. 16; Lam. ii. 15, &c.

23, 24. am I come up . . . Lebanon. It was a favourite boast of Assyrian monarchs that they had penetrated 'trackless paths and difficult mountains on wheels of iron and bronze' (see Cheyne, *Proph. of Isaiah*, i. p. 219). The verbs in the two verses should be pointed and translated as perfects.

24. strange (or, 'foreign') **waters:** cf. Prov. v. 15, ix. 17.

rivers of Egypt is undoubtedly more correct than the marginal 'defence,' though in Sennacherib's time no Assyrian army had set foot in Egypt.

25. The Divine answer to the impious boast: in all his successes the Assyrian had been the instrument of Yahweh's eternal purpose.

26 into ruinous heaps. Therefore their inhabitants were of
small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they
were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as
the grass on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it
27 be grown up. But I know thy sitting down, and thy
going out, and thy coming in, and thy raging against me.
28 Because of thy raging against me, and for that thine
arrogancy is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put
my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and
I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.
29 And this shall be the sign unto thee: ye shall eat this
year that which groweth of itself, and in the second year
that which springeth of the same; and in the third year
sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit

Cf. Isa. x. 6 ff., xlv. 1 ff. It is better to render: 'Hast thou not heard? Long ago have I made it; from the days of old have I formed it,' &c.

26. Render, 'while their inhabitants, being of small power, were terrified,' &c.

grass on the housetops. See Ps. cxxix. 6–8.

corn blasted . . . grown up. The words in the Hebrew give no sense: there is obviously some confusion between the end of this verse and the beginning of the next. The best reading is perhaps that given by Kittel, combining a conjecture of Thenius with another by Wellhausen, and changing the first word in accordance with Isa. xxxvii. 27. Read accordingly, 'like a corn-field before the east wind,' continuing in verse

27, 'Before me is thy rising up and thy sitting down (cf. Ps. cxxxix. 2), and thy going out and thy coming in I know.' The remaining words, **and thy raging against me,** have to be struck out, for metrical reasons (see next verse).

28. my hook in thy nose: cf. Ezek. xix. 4, xxix. 4, xxxviii. 4.

the way by which thou camest. See verse 33.

29. The **sign** offered to Hezekiah is of the same nature as that of Exod. iii. 12, &c.; i. e. it consists of a natural series of events which when they happened would attest that the circumstances had been accurately foreseen by the prophet. It refers to the suspension of regular husbandry till the third year from the time of prediction. In the current year the people would eat *ṣāphiăḥ*

thereof. And the remnant that is escaped of the house 30
of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit
upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, 31
and out of mount Zion they that shall escape: the zeal
of the LORD shall perform this. [I²] Therefore thus saith 32
the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not
come unto this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither
shall he come before it with shield, nor cast a mount
against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall 33
he return, and he shall not come unto this city, saith the
LORD. For I will defend this city to save it, for mine 34
own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the 35
LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians

(Lev. xxv. 5, 11), the growth from shaken ears of corn; in the following year, *ṣāḥîsh* (in Isaiah *shāḥîṣ*, the word does not occur elsewhere), i. e. grain that shoots up of itself; only in the third year will the fields be sown and reaped in the usual way. This implies that the Assyrians had been in the land in time to destroy one harvest (April, May), and would stay long enough to prevent the ploughing and sowing for the next. The proper sowing time was from October to November; but Wetzstein states that unless the ground be repeatedly broken up during the summer the next crop will not mature. If therefore the occupation lasted well through the summer of 701, there would be no harvest in 700—the year of the *ṣāḥîsh*. The year of the *ṣāphîāḥ* is that in which Isaiah speaks—the old Hebrew year commencing in the autumn.

30, 31. The idea of the remnant is a characteristic doctrine of Isaiah.

the zeal of the LORD: cf. Isa. ix. 7.

32. Therefore, resuming the 'whereas' of verse 20, introduces the original oracle of Isaiah, according to this narrative.

33. Cf. verse 28. It is singular that none of these predictions of Isaiah goes beyond the withdrawal of Sennacherib to his own land. There is no hint of the appalling disaster recorded in verse 35.

35. the angel of the LORD is associated with the pestilence in 2 Sam. xxiv. 15 f. The main fact is confirmed by an Egyptian legend recorded by Herodotus (ii. 141), according to which

an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when men
arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead
36 corpses. [I] So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed,
37 and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it
came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of
Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer smote
him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of
Ararat. And Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

20 [I^2] In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And

Sennacherib's invasion of Egypt was frustrated by field-mice (symbol of pestilence) gnawing the bows of the soldiers and the thongs of their shields during the night.

xix. **36, 37** are the conclusion of the first narrative, continuing verse 9[a]. The death of Sennacherib took place in 681: a notice of the assassination is found in the Babylonian chronicle (*KIB*, ii. p. 281 ff.). An Assyrian god **Nisroch** is not known: the name might be a corruption of *Nusku*, a solar deity.

Adrammelech is named as the parricide by profane historians (though the inscriptions mention only one son and give no name); **Sharezer** is mentioned only here.

the land of Ararat is Armenia (Assyrian, *Urartu*).

Esar-haddon reigned from 681–668.

xx. 1–11. *Hezekiah's Sickness and Recovery* (Isa. xxxviii. 1–8, 21, 22). The narrative certainly belongs to one of the Isaiah-biographies—most probably the second. In verse 6[b] there is an allusion to the Assyrian peril, which would indicate that the incident took place during the invasion, though it shows at the same time that it cannot have been subsequent to the deliverance of xix. 35 ff. The verse, however, is largely a reproduction of xix. 34, and is on other grounds strongly suspected of being an interpolation. Historical probability points to the conclusion that the events happened long before 701: see further on verses 12–19. Comparing the text with Isa. xxxviii, we discover important differences, which cannot be wholly explained by disturbance due to the insertion in Isaiah of the Psalm of Hezekiah. They rather indicate that the latter part of the narrative (referring to the sign) has undergone considerable modification at the hands of successive editors.

1. In those days. Many commentators are of opinion that in the original life of Isaiah this chapter preceded the account of the invasion; and that the opening phrase refers to some other

Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned 2
his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have 3
walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And it came to pass, afore Isaiah 4
was gone out into the middle part of the city, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, Turn again, and 5
say to Hezekiah the prince of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and 6
I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the

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incident which had been previously related. At all events, the expression cannot be taken to prove that the sickness of Hezekiah followed the invasion of Sennacherib.

Set thine house in order: the last duty of a dying man (1 Kings ii. 1-9; 2 Sam. xvii. 23).

2. turned his face. Cf. 1 Kings xxi. 4.

3. with a perfect heart and **good in thy sight:** favourite expressions of the compiler of Kings (1 Kings viii. 61, xi. 4, 38, xv. 3, 14, &c.).

4. gone out into.... Read, with marg., 'gone out of the middle court.' On the 'middle court' see on 1 Kings vii. 8. The verse is greatly abridged in Isa. xxxviii. 4.

5. prince of my people: cf. 1 Sam. ix. 16, x. 1; 1 Kings i. 35.

6. fifteen years: agreeing with xviii. 2 and 13. It is extremely probable that the date in xviii. 13 was arrived at by calculation based on xviii. 2 and this verse (deducting fifteen years from the twenty-nine years of the reign gives the fourteenth year as the date of the sickness). On the further question whether the calculation is erroneous, or whether an editor has merely transferred the date of the sickness to the invasion of 701, see note on xx. 12-19 below.

and I will deliver ... sake. Since these words somewhat

king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own
7 sake, and for my servant David's sake. And Isaiah said,
Take a cake of figs. And they took and laid it on the
8 boil, and he recovered. And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah,
What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and
that I shall go up unto the house of the LORD the third
9 day? And Isaiah said, This shall be the sign unto thee
from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he
hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or
10 go back ten steps? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light
thing for the shadow to decline ten steps: nay, but let
11 the shadow return backward ten steps. And Isaiah the
prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow

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mar the connexion with verse 7, and are partly repeated from xix. 34, it is reasonable to suppose that they have been inserted by the compiler.

7. The medicinal use of figs is mentioned by Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* xxiii. 7: 'ad aperienda ulcera'), and is kept up by Oriental physicians to the present day. There is nothing to warrant the opinion that the sickness was a sporadic case of the pestilence that had destroyed Sennacherib's host.

8. The request for a sign is not unnatural, even after the crisis of the disease had passed, though it may have been some feeling of that kind that induced the editor of Isaiah to omit verse 7. The account of the sign, however, is given in Isaiah in a much simpler form; and it is difficult to resist the impression that the tradition has been amplified in Kings. Thus it is probable that verse 9 followed immediately on verse 7, and that the sign was voluntarily appointed by Isaiah (cf. xix. 29), without the offer of an alternative between two miracles.

9. shall the shadow, &c. The Hebrew reads (as in marg.), 'the shadow is gone forward ten steps'; to which the only natural continuation would be: 'it shall go back ten steps' (omitting the particle *'im* = 'or'). This corresponds to the representation in Isaiah (xxxviii. 8).

10 belongs to the later version of the incident, being based on the misconception of verse 9 just pointed out.

decline is the same as 'go forward' in verse 9; this is **a light thing,** being at the most only an acceleration, not easily verified, of the natural order of things.

ten steps backward, by which it had gone down on the dial of Ahaz.

At that time Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, 12

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11. by which it had gone down. The Hebrew verb is feminine, whereas 'shadow' (the antecedent to 'it') is masculine. The text has evidently been accommodated to Isa. xxxviii. 8, where the sun itself (often feminine in Hebrew) is said to have turned back.

the dial of Ahaz: *lit.* 'the steps of Ahaz' (marg.). There is little in the passage to suggest that a regularly constructed sundial is meant, although such implements were known to the Babylonians (Herod. ii. 109) and might have been introduced in Jerusalem. A shadow falling on a flight of steps in the palace court, and affording a rough measure of time, would sufficiently explain the terms used.

xx. 12–19. *The Embassy of Merodach-baladan* (Isa. xxxix). Merodach-baladan was the ruler of Bit Yakin, a small Chaldaean state at the head of the Persian Gulf. With the help of the Elamites he had seized Babylon in the year 721, and reigned there till 710, when he was expelled by Sargon. In the beginning of Sennacherib's reign (*c.* 702) he again established himself in Babylon, but held the throne only about nine months. Since his final overthrow by Sennacherib preceded the campaign of 701, it is clear that the narratives of ch. xx belong to an earlier date than those of chs. xviii, xix. It is important to determine whether the embassy here recorded was sent during his earlier reign of twelve years (721–710), or during his short tenure of power in 702. The probabilities of the case are all in favour of the earlier date. Merodach-baladan's position in 702 was too insecure to afford opportunities for negotiations with distant enemies or disaffected provinces of the Assyrian Empire. We may therefore assume that the incident took place some time between 721 and 710; and we have to consider how the assumption bears on the serious difficulty presented by the chronology of Hezekiah's reign. If the accession of Hezekiah be put in 727 (see Introd. p. 43 f.), then the fourteenth year of Hezekiah (*c.* 714) might be the correct date of his sickness and of Merodach-baladan's embassy; and the mistake of the editor in xviii. 13 might have arisen solely from the erroneous assumption that these events were the immediate sequel of the invasion of Judah, which actually occurred thirteen years later. If, however, Hezekiah's accession is brought down to 720, it is plain that the Babylonian mission cannot be assigned even approximately to his fourteenth year. (See further Winckler, *Alttest. Unters.* p. 138 ff.)

12. For **Berodach-baladan,** read 'Merodach-baladan,' as in

king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.
13 And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious oil, and the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion,
14 that Hezekiah shewed them not. Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country,
15 even from Babylon. And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my
16 treasures that I have not shewed them. And Isaiah said
17 unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that

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Isa. xxxix. 1 (so also LXX). The Babylonian form is 'Marduk-habal-iddina.'

that Hezekiah had been sick. Read, as Isa. xxxix. 1, 'that he had been sick and had recovered.' The motive alleged was merely a pretext to cover the real political object of the mission, which was to form a league against Assyria.

13. For **hearkened unto them** we should again read as in Isaiah (and LXX): 'was glad because of them'—his vanity was flattered.

the house of his precious things. The Hebrew *bêth nĕkôth* is the equivalent of the Assyrian *bît nakanti*, i. e. 'treasure-house' (so LXX. L', &c.). The resemblance to the word for 'spices,' on which the marginal rendering reposes, is accidental.

the spices . . . oil: natural products of the land, stored for commerce; cf. 1 Kings x. 10.

the house of his armour is possibly the same as the House of the Forest of Lebanon (1 Kings vii. 2 ff.; cf. Isa. xxii. 8).

14. The prophet's interposition shows that he suspected the king of a disposition to join an alliance against Assyria—a policy to which Isaiah was always resolutely opposed.

17, 18 are a prophecy of the Babylonian Captivity, not of the imprisonment of Manasseh in Babylon in the reign of Asshur-

which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day,
shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith
the LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, 18
which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they
shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.
Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the 19
LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, Is it
not so, if peace and truth shall be in my days? [D] Now 20
the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and
how he made the pool, and the conduit, and brought
water into the city, are they not written in the book of
the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And Hezekiah 21
slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in
his stead.

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bani-pal (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11). It is, however, the only case where such a prediction is attributed to Isaiah; and it is not possible to reconcile it with his known anticipation of the course of events. We must suppose that the message of the prophet on this occasion had reached the late writer of the narrative in a form coloured by subsequent history.

18. The words **which thou shalt beget** imply that the calamity would fall on Hezekiah's own children. They are possibly an explanatory gloss.

19. Good is the word of the LORD: an expression of pious resignation. The second half of the verse is wanting in the LXX, and is given in a somewhat different form in Isa. xxxix. 8. On the postponement of a calamity as a mitigation of punishment, see xxii. 18 ff., 1 Kings xxi. 28 f.

xx. 20, 21. *Concluding Notice on Hezekiah.*

20. how he made the pool, &c. The reference is undoubtedly to the so-called Siloam canal, by which the water of the Virgin's Spring (Gihon, 1 Kings i. 33) was conducted through the temple mount to the Pool of Siloam on the west side of the hill. Cf. the fuller statement of 2 Chron. xxxii. 30: 'Hezekiah also stopped the upper spring of the waters of Gihon, and brought them straight down on the west side of the city of David.' (See also Ecclus. xlviii. 17). That this important work was really executed by Hezekiah there is no good reason to doubt. Its purpose was to secure the water of the spring (which lay outside the eastern wall) for the inhabitants of the city during a siege.

21 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; and he reigned five and fifty years in Jerusalem:

xxi. 1–18. *The Reign of Manasseh.* (2 Chron. xxxiii. 1–20.)

With the accession of Manasseh at the early age of twelve the idolatrous and anti-prophetic party in the state seems to have recovered its influence in the royal councils. The note of the reign was reaction against the religious policy pursued by the last king in his effort to centralize and purify the national worship. The reforming measures of Hezekiah were reversed, the worst abuses of former times were revived, and new forms of heathenism and superstition, partly due to prolonged contact with Assyria, were introduced. It is probable that verse 16 refers to a wholesale persecution of prophets and others who set themselves against the current which threatened to efface everything distinctive of the nationality and religion of Israel. After ages looked back on this long and evil reign as the time when the doom of the nation was irrevocably sealed, and the captivity of Israel decreed by Yahweh. (Cf. xxiii. 26.)

The account of the reign appears to be wholly the work of the two chief editors of Kings, and contains no statement that can be definitely assigned to an independent source, although one at least was available (verse 17). The introductory and closing formulas are of course to be assigned to the main compiler, and probably also verse 16. Verses 7–15, which presuppose the Exile, and show how that calamity was rendered inevitable by the sins of Manasseh, in spite of Yahweh's promises regarding the temple, are supposed to have been added by the Exilic redactor from whose hand the book was finally issued. In the remaining verses (2^{b}–6) it is quite impossible to discriminate between the two editors.

It may be noted that the reign of Manasseh coincides with the highest development of Assyrian power in the west. The long-coveted conquest of Egypt was effected by Esar-haddon (681–668) in 670, and was maintained in the early years of Asshur-bani-pal (668–626). That Manasseh was a vassal of Assyria might safely be taken for granted; and we have monumental evidence of the fact in two lists of tributary princes (one of Esar-haddon's reign, and the other of Asshur-bani-pal's) where his name occurs (*COT, ad loc.*). The account of his being taken as a prisoner to Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11–13) is thought to be connected with his participation in the revolt of Shamash-shum-ukin, brother of Asshur-bani-pal (*c.* 647). There is no reason to question the historicity of the notice in Chronicles, although the further statement that he repented and reversed the policy of his earlier reign is harder to believe in the face of the silence of Kings.

and his mother's name was Hephzi-bah. And he did 2
that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the
abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out
before the children of Israel. For he built again the 3
high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed;
and he reared up altars for Baal, and made an Asherah,
as did Ahab king of Israel, and worshipped all the host
of heaven, and served them. And he built altars in the 4
house of the LORD, whereof the LORD said, In Jerusalem
will I put my name. And he built altars for all the host 5
of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.
And he made his son to pass through the fire, and 6
practised augury, and used enchantments, and dealt with

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2. did that which was evil. . . . The expression refers as usual to sins of *cultus* committed by Manasseh. These are enumerated in the succeeding verses, and are condemned from three points of view: (*a*) as a repetition of the abominations of the aboriginal Canaanites (verses 2, 9, 11: cf. xvi. 3, xvii. 8, 11); (*b*) as an imitation of the heathenism of the house of Ahab (verse 3: cf. xvi. 3); and (*c*) as a profanation of the temple (verses 7 ff.).

3. On Hezekiah's reformation, see xviii. 4; on Ahab's Baal-altar and Asherah, 1 Kings xvi. 32 f. For **altars** the LXX has, here and in verses 4, 5, 'altar.'

all the host of heaven: the heavenly bodies (sun, moon, and stars), as xvii. 16; Deut. iv. 19, xvii. 3, &c. This astral worship had its origin and centre in Babylonia, and was naturalized in Judah in consequence of its long subjection to the influence of Assyrian civilization. The allusions in the contemporary literature (Deut.; Zeph. i. 5; Jer. viii. 2, xix. 13: cf. Jer. xliv. 17 ff., &c.) show how prevalent it became in the century preceding the Exile.

4. In Jerusalem . . . name: referring to the building of the temple; cf. 1 Kings viii. 16, ix. 3.

5. in the two courts. So far as we know the pre-Exilic temple had only one court. Either the expression includes the palace-court, or the language is accommodated to the arrangement of the second temple, in which case it would be an interpolation (superfluous in any case after verse 4).

6. On child-sacrifice, see xvi. 3.

practised . . . enchantments. See Deut. xviii. 10, 11, where all the offences specified in this verse are expressly forbidden.

dealt with. Render, as marg., 'appointed,' legalizing a

them that had familiar spirits, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke
7 him to anger. [D²] And he set the graven image of Asherah, that he had made, in the house of which the LORD said to David and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all
8 the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever: neither will I cause the feet of Israel to wander any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; if only they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant
9 Moses commanded them. But they hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced them to do that which is evil more than did the nations, whom the LORD destroyed before
10 the children of Israel. And the LORD spake by his
11 servants the prophets, saying, Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his

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practice that had long been recognized as opposed to the religion of Yahweh (1 Sam. xxviii. 3). The Hebrew word *'ôb* seems to have originally denoted the 'familiar spirit' itself, i. e. the ghost of a person deceased; the medium through whom its communications were given was strictly *ba'al 'ôb*, or *ba'alath 'ôb* (possessor of an *'ôb*). Here we have an instance of the secondary usage, in which the name *'ôb* is applied to the medium himself (or herself).

7. the graven image of Asherah. See on 1 Kings xiv. 23. Asherah is here plainly used as the proper name of a goddess.

the LORD said . . . son: 1 Kings viii. 15–26, ix. 1 ff.

9. After **evil** the LXX adds, 'in the eyes of the Lord' (as verses 2, 15, &c.).

10. The following verses (11–15) are a summary of the messages of the prophets of this period, of whom there were doubtless many more than we know of: cf. the oracle of Huldah, xxii. 15 ff., Jer. xxvi. 20.

11. and hath done wickedly above . . . Better, as LXX, 'which are worse than . . .'

idols: therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, 12
Behold, I bring such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah,
that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.
And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, 13
and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe
Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning
it upside down. And I will cast off the remnant of mine 14
inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their
enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all
their enemies; because they have done that which is evil 15
in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the
day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this
day. [D] Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very 16
much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to
another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin,
in doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.
Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he 17
did, and his sin that he sinned, are they not written in
the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And 18
Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried in the
garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and
Amon his son reigned in his stead.

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12. both his ears shall tingle: 1 Sam. iii. 11; Jer. xix. 3.

13. The first part of the verse says simply that the fate of Samaria and its chief dynasty shall be meted out to Jerusalem. That measuring line and plummet should in themselves have been current emblems of destruction is hardly conceivable, in spite of Isa. xxxiv. 11; Lam. ii. 8. Amos vii. 8 does not suggest such an idea, any more than the verse before us.

as a man wipeth a dish. Isa. xxiv. 1 seems to contain a reminiscence of this strong simile.

16. innocent blood: see xxiv. 4, and cf. Deut. xix. 10, &c.

from one end to another: *lit.* 'mouth to mouth'; as in x. 21. Amongst those slain by Manasseh Jewish legend places Isaiah the prophet.

18. in the garden of Uzza. The interment of Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 33) seems to have been the last that took place

19 Amon was twenty and two years old when he began
to reign; and he reigned two years in Jerusalem: and
his mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of
20 Haruz of Jotbah. And he did that which was evil in
21 the sight of the LORD, as did Manasseh his father. And
he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and
served the idols that his father served, and worshipped
22 them: and he forsook the LORD, the God of his fathers,
23 and walked not in the way of the LORD. [KJ] And the
servants of Amon conspired against him, and put the
24 king to death in his own house. But the people of the
land slew all them that had conspired against king
Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son
25 king in his stead. [D] Now the rest of the acts of
Amon which he did, are they not written in the book of
26 the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And he was buried

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in the ancient sepulchre of the kings of Judah 'in the city of David.' 'Uzza' is supposed to be a corruption of Azariah (Uzziah), and the garden here referred to must have been one laid out by that king in the court of the palace. Since it is also called **the garden of his own house**, we may suppose that Manasseh had built a house within it, in the grounds of which he made a private sepulchre for himself. Here Amon also was buried (verse 26); Josiah was buried 'in his own sepulchre' (xxiii. 30); the burial of Jehoiakim is not recorded (but see on xxiv. 6); and of the remaining kings none died in Canaan. It is probably these graves that Ezekiel alludes to in xliii. 7 as contaminating the temple by their proximity—with 'but the wall between me and them.'

xxi. 19–26. *The Reign of Amon.* (2 Chron. xxxiii. 21–25.) Of this king's reign nothing is recorded except that he followed in the footsteps of his father. Like his ancestor Jehoash he fell by a conspiracy amongst the courtiers, of the cause of which we are not informed. The crime was avenged by the body of the people, who set his young son Josiah on the throne. It is hardly to be supposed, therefore, that dissatisfaction with the idolatrous tendencies of the court was the motive of the assassination, or had anything to do with the complete reversal of religious policy which marked the succeeding reign.

in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; 22

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26. Instead of **in his sepulchre** LXX (L) reads, 'in the sepulchre of his father.' See on verse 18.

xxii. 1—xxiii. 30. *Josiah and the Deuteronomic Reformation.* (2 Chron. xxxiv. 1—xxxv. 27.)

The events which make the reign of Josiah memorable in the religious history of Israel are the discovery of a lost law-book in the temple, the formation of a national covenant on the basis of that document, and a thorough-going reform of the public religion in accordance with its requirements. The record of the reign is occupied almost entirely with a circumstantial account of these occurrences. The basis of the narrative is in all probability the Judaean document which appears in ch. xii and xvi. This has been slightly altered and supplemented here and there by editors; but on the whole it remains intact; and, being older than the first compiler of Kings, must be very nearly contemporaneous with the events narrated.

That the legal code then promulgated corresponds in the main with some form of our Book of Deuteronomy was perceived by Jerome and other patristic writers, and is rendered practically certain by critical evidence. It is impossible here to summarize the arguments by which that conclusion is supported (see Driver, *Commentary on Deuteronomy*); but one important element is the numerous coincidences (to be pointed out below) between the reforms actually carried out by Josiah and the provisions of Deuteronomy. No other part of the Pentateuch is involved in Josiah's reformation; and indeed the code must have been comparatively short to admit of its being read twice in succession by different persons in one day. The narrative, of course, throws no light on the date or authorship of the book. It is noticeable that its Mosaic origin is nowhere asserted; the only place where it is spoken of as 'the law of Moses' being xxiii. 25, which is plainly an editorial addition. It can hardly be the case, therefore, that the belief in its Mosaic authorship had very much to do with its ready acceptance, although it be true that no part of the Pentateuch so ostensibly claims to be the work of Moses as Deuteronomy. The profound impression which it created must be explained rather by its appeal to the national conscience, enlightened by a succession of prophetically minded men from Isaiah downwards. That being so, the theory of forgery or pious fraud—that Hilkiah the priest had been a party to the preparation of the book, and only pretended to have found it—becomes something of

and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah
2 of Bozkath. And he did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

3 [J] And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the
4 LORD, saying, Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he

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an irrelevance: men do not perpetrate literary forgeries except to invoke the authority of some great name. On the other hand, the internal evidence of the Book of Deuteronomy makes it impossible to assign it to an earlier date than the age of Manasseh; and the hypothesis that it was composed during that reign, and deposited in the temple for safety, and afterwards lost sight of, is perhaps the one that best satisfies all the conditions of the problem.

xxii. 1, 2. *Introduction.* The compiler's unqualified approval of this reign, along with that of Hezekiah, is a measure of his absorbing interest in the purity of worship. These kings are unreservedly commended as the only two who seriously undertook the suppression of the high places, those last and almost impregnable strongholds of false religion in Israel.

xxii. 3–11. *The Discovery of the Law-Book.* In his eighteenth year Josiah sends his secretary Shaphan to the temple, to see to the distribution of the money collected for the repair of the sanctuary, in accordance with the regulations introduced by Jehoash (xii. 9 ff.). After this business had been satisfactorily arranged the priest Hilkiah produced a book of law which he had found in the temple. Shaphan, on reading it, perceived its importance, and determined to bring it under the notice of the king, to whom he read it aloud, after giving in his official report. The contents made a profound impression on the mind of Josiah, in whom its threats against prevalent abuses excited the gravest apprehensions for the future of the state.

3. the eighteenth year of king Josiah would be 621 B.C. The LXX dates the incident more precisely, 'in the eighth month'; but see on xxiii. 23 below.

4. the high priest. The title recurs in verse 8 and xxiii. 4;

may sum the money which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people: and let them deliver it into the hand of 5
the workmen that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the workmen which are in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house; unto the carpenters, and to the builders, and to 6
the masons; and for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the house. Howbeit there was no reckoning 7
made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand; for they dealt faithfully. And Hilkiah the 8
high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan, and he read it. And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought 9
the king word again, and said, Thy servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen that have the oversight of the house of the LORD. And Shaphan the 10
scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath

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elsewhere (verses 10, 12, 14, xxiii. 24) Hilkiah is simply called 'the priest.'

For **sum** LXX (B) has 'seal up'; LXX (L) 'pour out.' The last agrees with verse 9, and is probably the most suitable reading.

5–7. See the notes on xii. 9 ff.

8. the book of the law (cf. the indeterminate 'a book' in verse 10). The rendering 'a book of the law' is grammatically admissible, though hardly natural. The definite expression would be difficult to explain in the mouth of the priest: it suggests the 'idea of an ancient book of law known in former times and now merely rediscovered' (Ewald). That sense is not impossible, on the supposition that Deuteronomy had actually been lost in the reign of Manasseh; and is, at any rate, as consistent with that hypothesis as with the belief that the book was written by Moses. At the same time, since Deuteronomy was known for more than a century after this as *the* book of the law, we may suppose that the

delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the
11 king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard
the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.
12 And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam
the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and
Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying,
13 Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people,
and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that

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writer has employed the expression familiar to himself, instead of reporting the *ipsissima verba* of Hilkiah.

10. read it. In 2 Chron. xxxiv. 18 the phrase is altered to 'read *therein*': probably under the impression that the book was the entire Pentateuch, which was seen to be too long to be read through in the course of an interview.

11. The king's consternation proves that the law-book must have contained some fearful denunciations of the neglect of Yahweh's covenant. (Cf. verses 13, 16, 17.) No part of the Pentateuch is so well fitted to inspire such alarm as the closing discourses of Deuteronomy (ch. xxviii, xxix).

xxii. 12-20. *Consultation of the Prophetess Huldah.* On hearing the terrific curses with which the book closed, Josiah immediately seeks prophetic guidance, not of course with regard to the genuineness of the document, but with regard to the possibility of forgiveness for the sins of the past. For this purpose he sends Shaphan and Hilkiah, with three other nobles, to a prophetess named Huldah, the wife of one of his courtiers. The answer of Huldah is to the effect that the judgement is indeed irreversible, but is deferred on account of the devout spirit manifested by Josiah. It is thought by many critics that the original oracle held out brighter prospects, and has been remodelled by the younger editor in accordance with the actual issue. That the speech has been revised appears from the Deuteronomic phraseology; and it is argued that the enthusiasm with which Josiah set about the work of reformation would be unintelligible unless there had been a real hope of attaining an absolutely satisfactory result. It is doubtful, however, how far that argument is valid; and the language of verse 20 is not consistent with the assumption that it is a prophecy after the event.

12. The title of **king's servant** appears on an ancient Hebrew seal, bearing the inscription: 'To Obadiah the servant of the king' (Benzinger, *Archaeologie*, p. 258). It therefore denotes a particular office, though we are ignorant of its precise functions.

is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us. So Hilkiah the 14
priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the second quarter;) and they communed with her. And she said 15
unto them, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Tell ye the man that sent you unto me, [D²] Thus saith 16
the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: because they 17
have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and it shall not be quenched. But 18
unto the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the

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13. great is the wrath, &c. See on verse 11.

For **written concerning us** it is better to read: 'written in it,' as 2 Chron. xxxiv. 21 (so LXX (L)).

14. It has been thought surprising that the prophet Jeremiah was not consulted on this occasion. But Jeremiah was still a young man (Jer. i. 6), and probably little known in the capital. Although he had for five years been conscious of his vocation, there is nothing to show that he acquired much public influence till long after these events. Huldah, on the other hand, must have been a prophetess of established reputation.

in the second quarter: cf. Zeph. i. 10. A division of the city into two districts is also presupposed by Neh. iii. 9, 12; but nothing further is known about them.

they communed with her: *lit.* 'spake to her,' communicating the contents of the newly-discovered book.

16, 17. For the phraseology, see 1 Kings ix. 6, xiv. 9, 10; and cf. Jer. vii. 20, xix. 3 f., xxxii. 30, &c.

18. The verse ends in Hebrew with an unfinished sentence: 'The words which thou hast heard'; the phrase 'as touching'

LORD, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD,
the God of Israel: As touching the words which thou
19 hast heard, because thine heart was tender, and thou
didst humble thyself before the LORD, when thou heard-
est what I spake against this place, and against the inhabi-
tants thereof, that they should become a desolation and
a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me;
20 I also have heard thee, saith the LORD. Therefore,
behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt
be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine
eyes see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.
[J] And they brought the king word again.
23 And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the

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has no equivalent in the original. It is difficult to say how the text should be supplemented. Possibly the best reading is that presupposed by LXX (L) and the Vulgate: 'Inasmuch as thou hast heard my words, and thy heart was tender,' &c.

20. Cf. 1 Kings xxi. 29; 2 Kings xx. 19. The promise that Josiah should be gathered to his grave in peace is hardly in accordance with the actual circumstances of his death; and is not likely to have been composed after that event.

xxiii. 1-3. *Inauguration of the Covenant.* As the first step towards placing the nation on a right footing with Yahweh, Josiah convenes a great popular assembly in the temple; and, after reading the law-book in the audience of the people, enters with them into a solemn covenant to observe this law as the supreme rule of national conduct. With regard to the nature of the transaction, the following points are to be noted: (1) A covenant is not necessarily *bilateral*, that is to say, it does not necessarily imply reciprocal obligations between two parties. The word (*bĕrith*) seems to have denoted simply a well-understood and complex religious ceremony, which rendered an undertaking permanently and irrevocably binding on those concerned; and this ceremony was equally applicable to mutual engagements between two parties, to conditions imposed by one party on another, and to obligations assumed by one party for himself. (2) Although covenants between God and men are often mentioned in the O. T., it does not appear that in the present case Yahweh was a party to the covenant. It was made not *with* Yahweh, but 'before Yahweh.' Neither was it a covenant between the king on the one

elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up 2
to the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and
all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests,
and the prophets, and all the people, both small and
great: and he read in their ears all the words of the
book of the covenant which was found in the house of
the LORD. And the king stood by the pillar, and made 3
a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and
to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his
statutes, with all *his* heart, and all *his* soul, to confirm

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part and the people on the other, as in. xi. 17b. It was nothing more than a solemn engagement on the part of king and people together to keep the law. (3) It is not clear whether this covenant was primarily personal or national. From the fact that the adhesion of the people is only mentioned at the end it has been supposed that it was in the first instance a personal promise of Josiah that he would carry out the requirements of the law, in which the people afterwards concurred. But the exact meaning of the phrase 'stood to the covenant' is obscure; and since the law was read to the people before the covenant, it seems probable that the transaction was in its first intention national, the king acting as the representative of the people. (4) The effect of the covenant was to give to the Deuteronomic Code the force of statute law. It may be an exaggeration to say that 'the ancient Hebrews had no other conception of law except that of a contract,' and that 'a law became binding only when those who were to be bound by it had pledged themselves to its observance'; but that was certainly the manner in which this particular law became authoritative. (See Kraetschmar, *Die Bundesvorstellung im Alten Testament*; Davidson's article, 'Covenant,' in *DB.*)

2. the book of the covenant. Cf. verse 21, Exod. xxiv. 7. The title is not descriptive of any particular code in itself; it means the book which is made the basis of a covenant—the document in which the terms of the covenant are expressed.

3. by the pillar, as in xi. 14.

made a covenant is *lit.* 'cut a covenant'; the usual technical phrase, derived from the custom of cutting sacrificial victims into pieces, between which the parties to the covenant passed (Gen. xv. 17; Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19).

before the LORD. A covenant was in all cases a religious transaction in which Yahweh was invoked as the presiding deity.

to confirm, or, 'maintain.'

the words of this covenant that were written in this book:
4 and all the people stood to the covenant. And the king
commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of
the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring
forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that
were made for Baal, and for the Asherah, and for all the
host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem
in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them
5 unto Beth-el. And he put down the idolatrous priests,
whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense
in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the
places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned
incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to
6 the planets, and to all the host of heaven. And he

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stood to the covenant. The expression does not occur elsewhere, and its origin and significance are obscure.

xxiii. 4–15. *The Reformation of the Cultus.* The inauguration of the covenant was immediately followed by a series of sweeping reforms, which were carried out with every mark of earnestness and even violence. The particulars fall under two heads: (1) the purification of the temple from idolatrous emblems; and (2) the suppression of the provincial sanctuaries or high places. The former gives a startling picture of the extent to which the worship of Yahweh had been invaded by heathenish practices.

4. the priests of the second order should probably be read as singular: 'the second priest'; cf. xxv. 18 (= Jer. lii. 24), where the 'second priest' is named between the 'head priest' and the 'keepers of the threshold' (marg.).

Asherah: here again the female consort of Baal, as xxi. 7; see on 1 Kings xiv. 23.

the host of heaven: see xxi. 3, and Deut. iv. 19, xvii. 3.

the fields of Kidron: cf. Jer. xxxi. 40. Some would read 'furnaces,' after LXX (L).

5. the idolatrous priests: Heb. *kĕmārîm*, a word of doubtful etymology, but used in the O. T. only in a contemptuous sense (Hos. x. 5; Zeph. i. 4). This class of functionaries is said to have been appointed by the kings of Judah, and must be distinguished from the Levitical priests of the high places, with regard to whom see below on verses 8, 9.

the planets (Heb. *mazzālôth*: cf. *mazzārôth* in Job xxxviii.

brought out the Asherah from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the common people. And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, 7 that were in the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the Asherah. And he brought all the 8 priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beer-sheba; and he brake down the high places of the gates that were at the entering in of the gate of

32), probably 'mansions' in the astronomical sense. Assyriologists are not agreed as to the reference of the Assyrian word supposed to answer to the term here used: some apply it to the signs of the Zodiac, while others think it includes a larger number of stars or constellations (see *KAT*^{3}, p. 628).

6. graves of the common people. While the upper classes had their family sepulchres in their own ground, the poor were buried in a common graveyard (cf. Jer. xxvi. 23).

7. On **the sodomites**, see 1 Kings xiv. 24; cf. Deut. xxiii. 17.

hangings: *lit.* 'houses,' which gives no sense. The clause is obscure; but the best reading is perhaps that of LXX (L): 'tunics.'

8. The high places were abolished, in accordance with the fundamental idea of the Deuteronomic legislation (Deut. xii. 1 ff., &c.). The priests who officiated at these sanctuaries belonged to the tribe of Levi (see Ezek. xliv. 10, 12); and are regarded by the Deuteronomist as enjoying the full status of the priesthood. In their interest it was provided that any Levitical priest who chose to transfer his services to the central sanctuary should be admitted to the temple on a footing of equality with his brethren who ministered there (Deut. xviii. 6–8). Although this regulation could not be strictly enforced (see verse 9), it explains Josiah's motive in bringing 'all the priests out of the cities of Judah' (*sc.* to Jerusalem).

from Geba to Beer-sheba, the north and south limits of the kingdom. On the situation of Geba see 1 Kings xv. 22.

For **high places of the gates**, most moderns read, 'high places (*or*, house) of the satyrs' (changing *shĕʿārîm* to *sĕʿîrîm*). The 'satyrs' (or field-devils) were goat-shaped demons to whom sacrifice was offered, as we see from Lev. xvii. 7; 2 Chron. xi. 15.

Joshua the governor of the city, which were on a man's
9 left hand at the gate of the city. Nevertheless the priests
of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in
Jerusalem, but they did eat unleavened bread among
10 their brethren. And he defiled Topheth, which is in
the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might
make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to
11 Molech. And he took away the horses that the kings of

After **on a man's left hand** read, with LXX (L), 'as he enters the gate,' &c.

9 refers back to the first clause of verse 8. The meaning appears to be that the priests of the high places who had been brought to Jerusalem were denied the privilege of ministering at the altar, though they were permitted to share the temple dues, and were recognized as brethren of the temple priests. It is hardly fair to ascribe this deviation from the Deuteronomic law to mere professional jealousy; it may well have proved impracticable to admit so large a body of men to the highest offices of the priesthood. On **unleavened bread** as the portion of the priests, see Lev. vi. 14–18 (cf. Num. xviii. 9). As a statement of the general fact that the Levites shared the provision of the priests the expression is certainly peculiar; and it is possible that there is a special reference to the Feast of Unleavened Bread (verses 21–23), when the provincial Levites may have been first acknowledged as 'brethren' of the Jerusalem priests (Benzinger).

10. the valley of the children of Hinnom is by most identified with the *Wâdi er-Rabâbî*, west and south of Jerusalem; W. R. Smith, however, holds that it is the Tyropoeon, the ravine just below the temple on its west side; and Warren thinks it was the Kidron valley on the east. Its shortened name *Gê-hinnōm* (*Gehenna*, Matt. v. 22) became amongst the Jews and Moslems a title of the place of future torment, because of the horror excited by the revolting sacrifices referred to in this verse. The word **Topheth** (properly *Tĕphath*) probably means a fireplace made in the primitive fashion by digging a pit in the ground (W. R. Smith, *Rel. of Sem.*[2], p. 377, *n.* 2): on this the bodies of the human victims were burned.

11. The notice of the **horses** and the **chariots of the sun** is unique, and we cannot tell when or by whom they were introduced. The idea was no doubt borrowed from the Babylonians, amongst whom the sun-god *Shamash* (like the Helios of the Greeks) was represented as riding in a chariot drawn by horses (Jensen, *Kosmologie*, pp. 108, 109).

Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain, which was in the precincts; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. And the altars 12
that were on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king break down, and beat *them* down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron. And the high places that were before 13
Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile. And he brake in pieces the pillars, and 14
cut down the Asherim, and filled their places with the bones of men. Moreover the altar that was at Beth-el, 15

For **given to the sun** read 'set up for the sun.'

the precincts (*parvārîm*): probably the same word as *parbār* in 1 Chron. xxvi. 18, in which case it is the name of a western annexe to the temple building.

12. of the upper chamber of Ahaz. The ungrammatical construction proves the clause to be a gloss: hence **the roof** is in all probability that of the temple. The custom of sacrificing on the roofs of private houses is referred to in Jer. xix. 13, xxxii. 29; and was a common feature of Babylonian worship (*KAT*^{3}, p. 601). It has been conjectured that Ahaz had built an upper chamber on the temple, near to these altars on the roof (Benzinger, Kittel). On the altars of Manasseh, see xxi. 5. There seems to be some error of text in the verb for **beat down** (see marg.).

13. See on 1 Kings xi. 7.

before means 'to the east of,' and **on the right hand,** 'to the south.'

the mount of corruption: strictly, 'the mount of the destroyer' (see marg.). It is probably what is now known as the 'Mount of Offence' (*Jebel Baṭn el-Hawā*), the southern extremity of the ridge of Olivet, across the Kidron from Jerusalem.

15. Josiah's reforming activity extended beyond the boundary

and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat,
who made Israel to sin, had made, even that altar and
the high place he brake down; and he burned the high
place and stamped it small to powder, and burned the
16 Asherah. [Z] And as Josiah turned himself, he spied
the sepulchres that were there in the mount; and he
sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and
burned them upon the altar, and defiled it, according to
the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed,
17 who proclaimed these things. Then he said, What
monument is that which I see? And the men of the city
told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which
came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou
18 hast done against the altar of Beth-el. And he said, Let

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of his own kingdom to Beth-el, the chief seat of Jeroboam's calf-worship. The fact probably indicates some relaxation of central control from Nineveh. The second half of the verse is corrupt. For **and he burned the high place** read, with LXX, 'and he brake in pieces the stones thereof'; a high place could not be destroyed by burning. The two remaining clauses ought perhaps to be reversed, as in verse 6.

xxiii. 16–20. *Josiah in Samaria.* The passage is a late addition to the narrative, based on 1 Kings xiii. That it was not written by the author of verse 15 appears from the fact that the altar, whose destruction is there described, is here mentioned as still existing. It is a relief to think that Josiah's reformation may not have been really stained by such atrocities as are recorded in verse 20.

16. who proclaimed these things. There is an obvious omission before this clause, which we can supply from the LXX. Read: 'according to the word of Yahweh which the man of God proclaimed *when Jeroboam stood at the Feast upon the altar* (see 1 Kings xiii. 1). *And turning round he lifted up his eyes to the grave of the man of God* who proclaimed these things.'

17. monument. The word is used in Ezek. xxxix. 15 of a temporary mark set up over a fragment of a skeleton till it should be buried. The present passage is perhaps the only allusion in the O. T. to gravestones in the proper sense. The Pillar of Rachel's grave (Gen. xxxv. 20) was a mazzeba, with religious significance.

him be; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria. And all the houses also of the high 19
places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke *the* LORD to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el. And he slew all the priests of 20
the high places that were there, upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them; and he returned to Jerusalem.

[J] And the king commanded all the people, saying, 21
Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant. Surely there was 22
not kept such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of 23

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18. Samaria must here (and in verse 19) be the province; see 1 Kings xiii. 32.

20. Cf. 1 Kings xiii. 2, 32.

xxiii. 21–27. *Celebration of the Passover*, &c. A striking feature of the reformation was the observance of the passover in the manner prescribed by the newly-discovered law-book. The Deuteronomic law of the passover is found in Deut. xvi. 1-8, and differs in several important particulars from that of the Priestly Code (Exod. xii). But the innovation to which verse 22 calls attention was undoubtedly the fact of its being held at the central sanctuary. Formerly it had been a household feast which could be observed anywhere throughout the country (Deut. xvi. 5); now for the first time the people were obliged to come up to Jerusalem for the purpose of celebrating it. The narrative closes with the mention of some minor measures of reform (verse 24); verse 25 seems to be redactional; and verses 26, 27 are an addition by the younger editor, explaining why the reform proved ineffectual.

22. there was not kept . . .: *lit.* 'it was not done like this passover'; see above.

23. in the eighteenth year: in the same year, therefore, in which the law was discovered. This is, of course, possible only if the year commenced in autumn, according to the old Hebrew

king Josiah was this passover kept to the LORD in Jeru-
24 salem. Moreover them that had familiar spirits, and the
wizards, and the teraphim, and the idols, and all the
abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and
in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might confirm
the words of the law which were written in the book that
Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD.
25 [D?] And like unto him was there no king before him,
that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all
his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law
of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.
26 [D²] Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierce-
ness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled
against Judah, because of all the provocations that
27 Manasseh had provoked him withal. And the LORD
said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have
removed Israel, and I will cast off this city which I have
chosen, even Jerusalem, and the house of which I said,
28 My name shall be there. [D] Now the rest of the acts
of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the

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calendar. And in any case the statement of the LXX in xxiii. 3, that the discovery was made in the eighth month, must be incorrect.

24. Cf. xxi. 6 and Deut. xviii. 9–14.

teraphim (not mentioned in Deut.) were images of household deities (see Gen. xxxi. 19 ff.; Judges xvii. f.; 1 Sam. xix. 13 ff., &c.).

25. the law of Moses. See introductory note, p. 411.

neither after him . . . These words could not have been written earlier than the captivity of Judah.

26, 27. See xxi. 10–15.

xxiii. 28–30. *Conclusion: Death of Josiah.* Josiah fell in battle with Necho II of Egypt at Megiddo. The date was probably 608 B. C. The Assyrian Empire, threatened by a coalition of the Chaldeans and Medes, was tottering to its fall; and Necho resolved to seize the opportunity of establishing the Egyptian power over the Syrian provinces. The motive of Josiah's ill-fated

book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? [KJ] In his 29
days Pharaoh-necoh king of Egypt went up against the
king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah
went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when
he had seen him. And his servants carried him in a 30
chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jeru-
salem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the
people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and
anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

[D] Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when 31
he began to reign; and he reigned three months in
Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hamutal the
daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did that which 32

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enterprise is nowhere indicated. It is possible he may have merely furnished a contingent to an Assyrian army sent to oppose the Egyptians. But that is not likely. It is much more probable (especially in the light of 2 Chron. xxxv. 20 ff.) that he fought for his own hand, and cherished the ambition of restoring the ancient independence of the Hebrew monarchy. A notice of the battle is found in Herod. ii. 159.

29. Pharaoh-necoh is Necho II, the son of Psammetichus, and the second king of the twenty-sixth dynasty. He reigned from 609 to 594.

at Megiddo. See on 1 Kings iv. 12. Herodotus places the battle at *Magdōlos* (Migdol); but this is probably a mistake on the part of the Greek historian.

when he had seen him. Apparently, 'as soon as he had confronted him in battle'; cf. the expression in xiv. 8.

30. Jehoahaz was a younger son of Josiah (cf. verse 31 with verse 36), and therefore not the natural heir to the throne. His election by the people might be due to his being in sympathy with the national or anti-Egyptian policy of his father: see below.

xxiii. 31–35. *The Reign of Jehoahaz.* (2 Chron. xxxvi. 1–4.)

Continuing verse 30, the annalistic passage, verses 32–35, narrates how, three months after the battle of Megiddo, Necho summoned the young king of Judah to his head quarters at Riblah on the Orontes, put him in chains, and raised an older son of Josiah to the throne. The new king, whose name was changed

was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that
33 his fathers had done. [KJ] And Pharaoh-necoh put
him in bands at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he
might not reign in Jerusalem; and put the land to a
tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of
34 gold. And Pharaoh-necoh made Eliakim the son of
Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and changed
his name to Jehoiakim: but he took Jehoahaz away;
35 and he came to Egypt, and died there. And Jehoiakim
gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed
the land to give the money according to the command-
ment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of
the people of the land, of every one according to his
taxation, to give it unto Pharaoh-necoh.

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to Jehoiakim, accepted the Egyptian lordship, and taxed his subjects heavily to raise the tribute imposed by Necho on the country. The fate of Jehoahaz, who was taken a prisoner to Egypt and died there, is the theme of a striking elegy in ch. xix of Ezekiel.

33 appears the immediate continuation of verse 30, from which it is separated by the compiler's introductory formula.

Riblah (still bearing the name) is in the Orontes valley, about fifty miles south of Hamath. Its strategically important position made it a suitable resting-place for an army operating either from the south against Assyria (as here) or from the north against Israel (as in xxv. 21).

put the land to a tribute: better, 'imposed an indemnity on the land.'

For **a talent of gold** LXX (L) reads 'ten talents,' which is more likely to be correct.

34. Eliakim ('God establishes') and **Jehoiakim** ('Yahweh establishes') being practically identical, the change of name can signify nothing in itself. It is simply a mark of vassalage (cf. xxiv. 17).

35. The method of raising the fine must have resembled that adopted by Menahem of Israel (xv. 20), but the description is obscure. The last clause might be rendered, 'each man according to his taxation extorted the silver and the gold from the common people,' &c. The meaning would then be that the king assessed the landed proprietors according to their ability, and that these in

[D] Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he 36
began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem:
and his mother's name was Zebidah the daughter of Pe-
daiah of Rumah. And he did that which was evil in the 37
sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers
had done. [KJ] In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of 24
Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant

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their turn squeezed the money out of their tenants and retainers. But we cannot be certain that this is the sense.

xxiii. 36—xxiv. 7. *The Reign of Jehoiakim.* (2 Chron. xxxvi. 5-8.)

Early in Jehoiakim's reign the fall of Nineveh (between 608 and 606) brought about a new distribution of power in Western Asia. In the partition of the Assyrian Empire, which followed that event, the western half fell to Nabopolassar, the founder of the neo-Chaldean dynasty in Babylon (625-605). We have seen that Necho of Egypt had already seized the provinces west of the Euphrates; and accordingly one of the first acts of Nabopolassar was to expel the Egyptians from Syria. This task he entrusted to his son Nebuchadnezzar, who defeated Necho in the decisive battle of Carchemish (Jer. xlvi. 2) in the beginning of 605. Soon after the battle Nebuchadnezzar was recalled to Babylon by the news of his father's death; but the Egyptian resistance had been utterly broken, and the conquest of Syria was virtually complete. We read that Jehoiakim willingly transferred his allegiance to the king of Babylon, and that after three years he rebelled, and was in consequence harassed by bands of foreign troops till the close of his reign. The dates of these events are uncertain. If the submission took place immediately after the battle of Carchemish, the revolt must have occurred about 602, and five years would have elapsed before a Babylonian army marched against Jerusalem. We know of no reason why Nebuchadnezzar should have delayed so long; and it is perhaps easier to assume that the three years' service are reckoned from a settlement of the affairs of Syria some years subsequent to 605, and that the rebellion was near the end of Jehoiakim's reign.

36, compared with 31, shows that Jehoiakim was only a half-brother of Jehoahaz, and his senior by two years.

xxiv. **1. In his days:** resuming the extracts from the chronicle; see introductory note above. According to Jer. xxv. 1 and xlvi. 2 the fourth year of Jehoiakim coincides with the first year of Nebuchadnezzar and the battle of Carchemish.

three years: then he turned and rebelled against him.
2 [D²] And the LORD sent against him bands of the
Chaldeans, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the
Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and
sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the
word of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of his
3 servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of
the LORD came this upon Judah, to remove them out of
his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he
4 did; and also for the innocent blood that he shed; for
he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood: and the LORD
5 would not pardon. [D] Now the rest of the acts of
Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in
6 the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? So

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2. These predatory bands were doubtless employed by Nebuchadnezzar to keep Jehoiakim in play till a regular army could be sent against him. The **Chaldeans** would be drawn from the Babylonian garrisons stationed in Syria; and instead of **Syrians** (*'Aram*) we should probably read 'Edomites' (*'Edom*). To the nations here mentioned a parallel preserved in the LXX of 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5 adds the Samaritans; so that Judah must have been completely isolated in its defection from the Chaldean Empire. The passage referred to says further that the raiders were compelled to withdraw 'according to the word of the Lord by the hands of his servants the prophets.' Klostermann has directed attention to that reading as giving a fuller force to the particle at the beginning of the next verse, which should be rendered 'Howbeit.' If it were correct the situation would present a striking similarity to the Syro-Ephraimitic war in the time of Ahaz, when Isaiah prophesied a collapse of the nearer peril, but pointed to the graver danger of the Assyrian invasion behind it.

3, 4 are from the hand of the younger redactor; cf. xxiii. 26 f.

Surely: or, 'Howbeit': see on verse 2.

at the commandment, &c. Some prefer to read with the LXX, as in verse 20: 'because of the anger of Yahweh it befell Judah,' &c.

5. The Book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah is here referred to for the last time; and with this we lose the last sure trace of the original compiler of Kings, who is supposed to have

Jehoiakim slept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead. [KJ] And the king of Egypt came 7
not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken, from the brook of Egypt unto the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

[D²] Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began 8
to reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem three months: and his mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the 9
sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done. At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar 10
king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came 11

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finished his work some time before the Captivity. We cannot determine the exact point at which he laid down his pen; but it is probable that most of what follows was added during the Captivity by the younger editor.

6. LXX (L) adds the statement, which may very well be correct, that he 'was buried in the garden of Uzza with his father.' See on xxi. 18.

7. See introductory note above, p. 427.

xxiv. 8–17. *Jehoiachin and the First Captivity of Judah.* (2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, 10.)

Jehoiakim had died just in time to escape the vengeance of Nebuchadnezzar. Soon after the accession of his son Jehoiachin, a Babylonian army appeared before the walls of Jerusalem, and after a short siege the city surrendered. The king and his courtiers, with the *élite* of the upper classes, the men of war and the skilled artisans, were taken captive to Babylon; and the government of the enfeebled kingdom was handed over to a son of Josiah, from whom Nebuchadnezzar exacted a solemn oath of allegiance (Ezek. xvii. 13). This first deportation of Jews to Babylon took place in the year 598 or 597 (see below). Amongst the exiles was the prophet Ezekiel, who dates the Captivity from this event (Ezek. i. 2, &c.), and regards it as the real end of the Judaean state and monarchy.

8. three months: 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9 adds 'and ten days.'

11. The siege appears to have already commenced when Nebuchadnezzar arrived in person.

12 unto the city, while his servants were besieging it; and
Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of
Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his
princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took
13 him in the eighth year of his reign. [?] And he carried
out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD,
and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces
all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had
made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.
14 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes,
and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand
captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths; none
remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.
15 [D^2] And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon; and

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12. went out: the usual phrase for surrender; see xviii. 31.

the eighth year of his (Nebuchadnezzar's) **reign** is really 597 B.C., 604 being the first complete year of Nebuchadnezzar. This, however, does not agree with xxv. 27, according to which the deportation of Jehoiachin must have happened in 598. It is possible that both in this verse and in xxv. 8, 605 is reckoned the first year of Nebuchadnezzar (in accordance with the usual method of the Hebrew chronologist), so that the first Captivity fell in 598 and the second in 587. The discrepancy of one year at all events exists, and in Jer. lii. 28 the date of the first Captivity is given as the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar.

13, 14 are wrongly inserted here as a duplicate to verses 15, 16, which form the original sequel to verse 12. That a *partial* spoliation of the temple took place in 598 we know from Jer. xxvii. 18 f.; but it cannot have been so complete as is here suggested (see xxv. 15 ff.) Neither was 'all Jerusalem' carried away to Babylon on this occasion. It has been supposed by Stade that the two verses are a fragment taken from an account of the second Captivity under Zedekiah.

13. thence has no antecedent in the preceding narrative; unless, with LXX (L), we supply the sentence: 'And the king of Babylon entered into the city.'

14. even ten thousand captives. It is obviously difficult to reconcile the number with the data of verse 16.

the poorest sort, &c. This also agrees better with the view that the second Captivity is referred to.

the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the chief men of the land, carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, 16
even seven thousand, and the craftsmen and the smiths a thousand, all of them strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. And 17
the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began 18

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15. the king's mother: the queen-mother, as she is expressly called in Jer. xxix. 2.

the chief men of the land: the foremost, or leading men; cf. Ezek. xvii. 13.

16. men of might: probably, in this instance, 'men of substance'; see on 1 Kings i. 42.

strong: *lit.* 'heroes,' but probably here with the weakened sense of 'men liable to military service.' It is hardly to be supposed that all the artisans of Jerusalem were 'men of independent means' (so Kittel). The object of the king of Babylon was plainly to remove all the elements of strength from the state, and to leave it incapable of further resistance. The event proved that he had greatly underrated the courage and patriotism of the race with which he had to deal.

17. On the change of name, see xxiii. 34.

xxiv. 18—xxv. 21. *Zedekiah and the Final Captivity.* (2 Chron. xxxvi. 11–23.)

Of the reign of the last king of Judah nothing is here recorded save the events of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. From the Book of Jeremiah (xxvii f.) we learn that as early as the fourth year of his reign Zedekiah was implicated in treasonable negotiations with some of the neighbouring states; and it is highly probable that a journey which he made to Babylon in the same year (Jer. li. 59) was undertaken for the purpose of explaining his conduct to Nebuchadnezzar. Later, however, he gave way to the influence of the war-party, backed by Egyptian intrigue, and openly revolted. Jerusalem was speedily invested by a Chaldean army, but held out stubbornly for a year and a half, when a breach was made in the wall and the city was no longer defensible. The king and the army broke through the lines of the Chaldeans, and sought to save themselves by flight; but Zedekiah was overtaken near Jericho, taken before Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, and then sent in fetters to Babylon. A month later (evidently in consequence of orders

to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of
19 Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim
20 had done. For through the anger of the LORD did it come to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence: and Zedekiah rebelled
25 against the king of Babylon. And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against it; and they built forts against it
2 round about. So the city was besieged unto the eleventh
3 year of king Zedekiah. On the ninth day of the *fourth*

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issued by Nebuchadnezzar from Riblah) Jerusalem was razed to the ground by the Chaldean officer in charge of the operations, the bulk of the population were taken captive to Babylon, while about seventy of the leading men were sent to Riblah to be executed. These events took place in 587 or 586. It is impossible to say whether the narrative was taken from an independent source, or written by the (younger) editor himself. The parallel accounts in Jer. xxxix. 1, 2, 4–10 and ch. lii are probably extracted from the Book of Kings, though they have frequently preserved a purer text.

18. Hamutal: as xxiii. 31. Zedekiah, therefore, was a full brother of Jehoahaz, but not of Jehoiakim (xxiii. 36).

20. See on verse 3.

For refers to the wickedness of Zedekiah's reign; the persistence of the king in the evil courses of Jehoiakim was itself a presage of judgement, and a proof of Yahweh's displeasure with the nation.

xxv. **1.** The numbering of the months was a late usage introduced with the Babylonian calendar, in which the beginning of the year was reckoned from the spring season. Hence the investment of the city commenced in the month of January, 588 (or 587).

forts. The meaning of the Heb. *aāyāḳ* is uncertain; possibly a wall of circumvallation (siege-wall).

3. Read: 'In the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month.' The opening words have been dropped in the Hebrew, and must

month the famine was sore in the city, so that there was
no bread for the people of the land. Then a breach was 4
made in the city, and all the men of war *fled* by night by
the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by
the king's garden: (now the Chaldeans were against the
city round about:) and *the king* went by the way of the
Arabah. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after 5
the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and
all his army was scattered from him. Then they took 6
the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon
to Riblah; and they gave judgement upon him. And 7

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be restored as in Jer. lii. 6 (xxxix. 2). The date is July, 587 (? 586).

the famine was sore: see Jer. xxxvii. 21, xxxviii. 9.

4. and all the men of war. The text is again defective, as a comparison with Jer. xxxix. 4 and lii. 7 shows. We may read: 'and when the king and all the men of war saw it, they fled and went out of the city by night,' &c.

between the two walls denotes a spot on the south-east side of the city at the mouth of the Tyropoeon valley (see Isa. xxii. 11). The expression is explained in two ways: (1) It is supposed that an external wall had been thrown out from the main fortifications in order to enclose the Pool of Siloam and protect it from an enemy. Isa. xxii. 11, however, rather suggests the opposite, viz. that the 'two walls' were in existence before the reservoir between them was made. (2) Another view is that the west wall of the eastern hill and the east wall of the western hill ran parallel to each other for some distance up the Tyropoeon, and that the space between these is referred to. Such a spot would be suitable for deploying the troops after they passed through the gate, if their intention was to fight their way through the Chaldean lines. But it is idle to discuss the question till more is known of the position of the walls of ancient Jerusalem.

and the king **went** should probably be 'and they went' (as Jer. lii. 7).

the Arabah: the Jordan valley; see xiv. 25.

5. and all his army was (read, 'had been') **scattered:** not by the Chaldean attack; they had dispersed on reaching the open country.

6. Riblah. See xxiii. 33.

For **they gave judgement** read 'he gave . . . ,' as Jer. lii. 9.

they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

8 Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon,
9 unto Jerusalem: and he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem,
10 even every great house, burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were *with* the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.
11 And the residue of the people that were left in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the residue of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the
12 captain of the guard carry away captive. But the captain

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7. Putting out the eyes was a punishment resorted to by the Assyrians in dealing with rebellious vassals.

carried him to Babylon. Jer. lii. 11 adds: 'and put him in prison till the day of his death.'

8. the nineteenth year. Jer. lii. 29 dates the event in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (i. e. 587); on the discrepancy, see above on xxiv. 12 and below on verse 27. The delay of nearly a month from the capture of the city means that express instructions from Nebuchadnezzar had been waited for.

9. The temple and palace are burned, and **all the houses of Jerusalem:** the following clause, which restricts the operation to the principal houses, must be an interpolation.

10. The walls are then broken down.

11. It would seem that the entire population of the capital was led into captivity, and of the rural population all but the very poorest (verse 12). Ewald points out that it is nowhere definitely asserted that the captives were taken to Babylonia.

that fell away: *lit.* 'the deserters that had deserted' during the siege.

the residue of the multitude would be the same as 'the residue of the people' at the beginning of the verse. But instead of 'multitude' Jer. lii. 15 reads 'artificers' (R. V. marg.); cf. xxiv. 16.

of the guard left of the poorest of the land to be vine-
dressers and husbandmen. And the pillars of brass that 13
were in the house of the LORD, and the bases and the
brasen sea that were in the house of the LORD, did the
Chaldeans break in pieces, and carried the brass of them
to Babylon. And the pots, and the shovels, and the 14
snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass
wherewith they ministered, took they away. And the 15
firepans, and the basons; that which was of gold, in
gold, and that which was of silver, in silver, the captain
of the guard took away. [?] The two pillars, the one 16
sea, and the bases, which Solomon had made for the
house of the LORD; the brass of all these vessels was
without weight. The height of the one pillar was 17
eighteen cubits, and a chapiter of brass was upon it:
and the height of the chapiter was three cubits; with
network and pomegranates upon the chapiter round
about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second
pillar with network. [D^2] And the captain of the guard 18
took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second

13–17. The larger temple utensils were broken up and carried as scrap-metal to Babylon. Neither the enumeration (verses 13–15) nor the description (16, 17) aims at being exhaustive. The latter, however, especially in verse 16, has been curtailed to the point of obscurity. The full text is given in Jer. lii. 21–23, a passage to which we are indebted for valuable information regarding the workmanship of Solomon's pillars (see on 1 Kings vii. 15 ff.). In verse 17 **three cubits** (the height of the chapiters) must be corrected to 'five cubits' (as Jer. lii. 22; 1 Kings vii. 16). The mention of the twelve brasen oxen in Jeremiah seems at variance with xvi. 17, which implies that these had been removed by Ahaz long before. Hence it is possible that the description of verses 16 f. (= Jer. lii. 20–23) has been excerpted literally from an ancient document giving an account of the temple furniture.

18–21. A number of the leading officials and other citizens, who had remained in the city, are apprehended and sent to Riblah, where they are put to death by Nebuchadnezzar.

19 priest, and the three keepers of the door: and out of the
city he took an officer that was set over the men of war;
and five men of them that saw the king's face, which
were found in the city; and the scribe, the captain of
the host, which mustered the people of the land; and
threescore men of the people of the land, that were found
20 in the city. And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard
took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon to
21 Riblah. And the king of Babylon smote them, and put
them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So
22 Judah was carried away captive out of his land. And as
for the people that were left in the land of Judah, whom
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over

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18. The five officials here named were doubtless the heads of the temple hierarchy; cf. xxiii. 4, xii. 9.

the second priest. The Hebrew might be rendered '*a* priest of the second rank' (see on xxiii. 4); but the parallel in Jeremiah (lii. 24) has the definite article.

19. an officer: 'a certain eunuch' (marg.), probably a civilian minister of war.

of them that saw the king's face: i. e. belonging to the inner circle of the king's advisers. Jeremiah gives the number as *seven*.

the scribe. Read, as in Jeremiah, 'the scribe (secretary) of the captain of the host' (marg.).

The word for **mustered** is peculiar, and means apparently something like 'mobilized.'

21. So Judah was carried away: *lit.* 'went into exile.' In Jer. lii. 28–30 there follows (but from an independent source) a list of the numbers of Judaeans carried captive on various occasions by Nebuchadnezzar.

xxv. 22–26. *Judah under a Babylonian Governor.*

The passage is an abridgement (made perhaps by the younger redactor) of the minute and thrilling narrative of Baruch in Jer. xxxix. 11–xliii. 7. Gedaliah, a Judaean of noble birth and a friend of Jeremiah (see below), was appointed governor of the desolated province. He fixed his residence at Mizpah, in the vicinity of Jerusalem; and speedily gained the confidence of the scattered commandos in the field, whom he induced to accept the new régime and settle down as peaceful cultivators of the soil.

them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, governor.

Now when all the captains of the forces, they and 23
their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the

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This hopeful beginning of a new social order was, however, ruined by a mad act of revenge on the part of a scion of the Davidic house named Ishmael, who treacherously murdered Gedaliah and those who were about him, including some Chaldean soldiers. The fuller account in Jeremiah relates how one of Gedaliah's captains overtook Ishmael on his flight towards Ammon, and brought back the Jewish prisoners whom he was dragging into captivity. But the feeble community had received a shock from which it could not recover. Fearing that they would be held responsible by Nebuchadnezzar for the murder of his deputy, the leaders resolved to migrate to Egypt; and thither accordingly they went, carrying with them the aged Jeremiah, who had vainly endeavoured to turn them from their purpose.

22. Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. Ahikam was one of the nobles who, on a memorable occasion, intervened to protect Jeremiah from the fury of the priests and the people (Jer. xxvi. 24). At an earlier period he had been one of the deputation who went to consult the prophetess Huldah regarding the book of the law discovered in the temple (xxii. 12). These incidents help to explain the choice of Gedaliah for the difficult post of governor under a foreign rule. His family stood high in the esteem both of the court and of the people, and probably belonged to the moderate party which was friendly to Jeremiah and opposed to the insensate policy which had brought about the conflict with Babylon. His fitness for the position appears clearly from the sympathetic narrative in Jeremiah.

23. the captains of the forces are, as we see from Jer. xl. 7, the commanders of armed bands in the open country which had not as yet surrendered to the Chaldeans. But whether they had been conducting guerilla warfare during the siege, or were detachments of the garrison of Jerusalem that had escaped, there is no evidence to decide.

On **Mizpah** see on 1 Kings xv. 22.

Ishmael the son of Nethaniah was soon discovered by the other captains to be a traitor, in league with the king of Ammon (Jer. xl. 14) to assassinate Gedaliah.

Johanan took the lead in exposing the plot, and afterwards

son of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite,
24 they and their men. And Gedaliah sware to them and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not because of the servants of the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.
25 But it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldeans that were
26 with him at Mizpah. And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the forces, arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.
27 And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of

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headed the expedition which intercepted Ishmael and recovered his captives.

24. Fear not because of the servants. Read, as in Jer. xl. 9, 'Fear not to serve.'

25. in the seventh month: of the same year in which Jerusalem was destroyed. The complete account of the incidents must be read in Jer. xl. 8 ff.

xxv. 27–30. *The Release of Jehoiachin.*

The Book of Kings, which has been on the whole a history of national decline and misfortune, nevertheless closes with a note of hope. The legitimate sovereign Jehoiachin, who had languished in a Babylonian prison till the death of Nebuchadnezzar (562), was set free at the very commencement of the following reign, and for the remainder of his life was entertained with regal honours at the court of Babylon. The precise significance of the event is obscure; and little is to be gained by speculation regarding the motives, political or other, of so remarkable an act of clemency on the part of Evil-merodach. But it is obvious that it must have excited the liveliest expectations in the Jewish community. The bestowal of royal honours on their king was at once a recognition of their nationality and, from a higher point of view, a pledge of Yahweh's continued favour to the dynasty of David, round which the Messianic hope had entwined itself (Meyer, *Entstehung des Judenthums*, p. 78). It was, in fact, the first indication of a better future for the people of Israel; and we can understand how

the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; and he spake kindly to him, and 28
set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon. And he changed his prison 29
garments, and did eat bread before him continually all the days of his life. And for his allowance, there was 30
a continual allowance given him of the king, every day a portion, all the days of his life.

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a contemporary historian should signalize the incident as a proof that Jerusalem's warfare was accomplished and her sin pardoned. It is probable that the book was concluded soon after the death of Jehoiachin, and before other and more decisive signs of the coming deliverance had appeared.

27. in the seven and thirtieth year. Nebuchadnezzar died in 562, and the liberation of Jehoiachin took place in the last days of the same (Babylonian) year, i. e. in the spring of 561 according to our calendar. Reckoning backwards, we find that the year of Jehoiachin's imprisonment must have been 598. This result agrees with Jer. lii. 28, and furnishes an additional argument for dating the first Babylonian Captivity in 598 (not 597, see on xxiv. 12).

Evil-merodach (Bab. *Amil-Marduk*) reigned only from 562 to 560. We must suppose that the favour he had extended to Jehoiachin was continued under his successors; otherwise the expression 'all the days of his life' would hardly have been employed.

did lift up the head: as Gen. xl. 13. In Jer. lii. 31 an additional verb is inserted: '*And brought him forth* out of prison.'

28. the kings that were with him in Babylon: i. e. he gave him precedence over the other subjugated kings who were detained in Babylon.

29. Cf. 1 Kings ii. 7.

30. Before **all the days of his life** Jer. lii. 34 has the more explicit statement: 'until the day of his death.'

APPENDIX

Note I. On the Site of Solomon's Buildings. (p. 121.)

In trying to understand the position of the suite of buildings described on pp. 116–121, the student will find it necessary to keep two facts before his mind. In the first place, the ancient city of Jerusalem extended much further south than the line of the present wall. In the second place, the natural conformation of the ground is obscured by the vast and irregular accumulation of débris (from 30 to 120 feet deep) over which the modern city is built. The leading features of the topography have, however, been ascertained by a series of excavations carried on during the last seventy years; and it is now possible to form a fairly distinct conception of the place where Solomon's palace must have stood.

It may be necessary to premise that the natural site of the city consists of two ridges, carved out of the main central plateau of Palestine by two deep valleys—the Kidron on the east and the *Wādi er-Rabābī* on the west and south—and separated from each other by the shallower valley which Josephus calls the Tyropœon, running nearly north and south between them. It may now be regarded as a settled point that the fortress of Zion, or the city of David, stood on the eastern ridge, near its southern extremity, and therefore some four hundred yards south of the modern wall. Excavations conducted by the German Palestine Society seem to show (though the evidence has been disputed) that this part of the ridge was cut off from the higher ground to the north by a natural depression in the rock, which led down to the Kidron valley somewhere near the Virgin's Spring. This southern spur may at one time have risen to a higher elevation than at present; and it is *possible* that this was the hill artificially lowered by Simon the Maccabee, so that it might not overlook the temple (Josephus, *Ant.* xiii. 215 ff., *Bell. Jud.* v. 139). However that may be, the next summit of the eastern ridge to the north now rises more than 200 feet above the level of the southern spur; and this summit, forming a fairly even surface of about 5,500 square yards, and being as yet unbuilt in the time of David, offered the most tempting site in all the locality for a great palace-fortress, such as Solomon designed to erect.

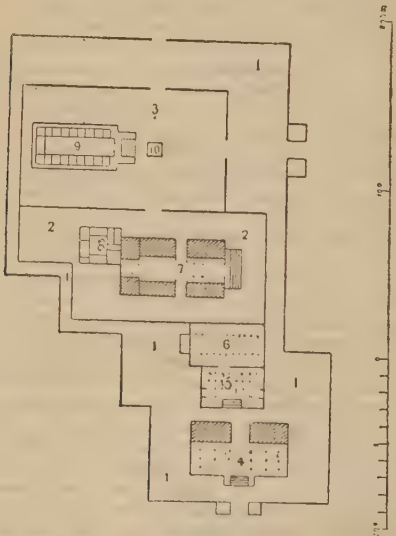
Here the temple stood, for certain ; and as we have seen that the palace stood in the same 'great court' as the temple, we must seek a site for it on the same hill, where the topographical conditions may admit of it. But first it is necessary to determine the exact position of Solomon's temple.

The whole of this higher summit is now enclosed in the *Ḥarām esh-Sherīf*, which in all probability represents the temple-area as enlarged by Herod, and which forms the south-east angle of the modern city wall. The Haram is an irregular quadrangle, measuring roughly 1,500 feet from north to south, and 1,000 feet from east to west. It is bounded by huge retaining walls, built up from the adjacent valleys on all sides ; the south-west corner, indeed, actually crosses the bed of the Tyropoeon and rises from the slope of the *western* hill. Behind these walls the earth has been piled up so as to secure a somewhat uneven surface at the natural level of the summit. Almost in the middle of this area, but nearer its west side, stands the magnificent building called the *Kubbet es-ṣahra* or 'Dome of the Rock' (often wrongly designated the Mosque of Omar). It derives its name from a sacred rock in the interior, measuring about sixty feet long and forty-five broad, and projecting above the surface from four to six and a half feet. Although nowhere mentioned in the O. T., this rock figures largely in Jewish tradition ; and must undoubtedly be regarded as one of the most highly venerated *sacra* in Hebrew antiquity. Now, it is conjectured with much plausibility that the rock marks the spot where the altar of Solomon's temple stood ; and a channel is said to be still visible upon it, which is thought to have conveyed the sacrificial blood to a cavern underneath. If this be correct, the temple must have been situated to the west of the rock, where there was just room, without any very extensive substructures, for a building of the prescribed dimensions.

From this point the ridge shelved gradually down in a south-south-east direction ; and on *this* side alone could a natural site for the other buildings erected by Solomon have been found. It is concluded, therefore, that the palace lay to the south-east of the temple, at a somewhat lower elevation (probably on a series of terraces) ; and that the entire complex of buildings stood well within the lines of the present Haram. The result is in accordance with the constant usage of the O. T. : one 'goes up' from the palace to the temple (Jer. xxvi. 10), and 'down' from the temple to the palace (2 Kings xi. 19 ; Jer. xxii. 1, xxxvi. 12). Again, there is an ascent from the old city of David to the palace (1 Kings ix. 24) as well as to the temple (viii. 1) ; so that the palace must have stood higher than the city of David, but lower than the temple.

The relative positions of the various buildings within the great court can only be inferred from the order in which they are

mentioned in ch. vii. From Ezek. xliii. 8 we gather that the royal residence was next to the temple—and with this all other indications agree—and therefore the most northerly of the series. Since this is mentioned last in vii. 1–12, we may assume that the description proceeds from south (where the main entrance of the great court would naturally be) to north; and that the order and approximate disposition of the buildings was somewhat as shown in the annexed plan (taken from Benzinger's *Hebräische Archäologie*).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Note II. On the Story of Jeroboam in the LXX. (p. 190.)

In the existing texts of the LXX (B and L) the history of Jeroboam I is given in two distinct forms, of which one agrees substantially with the Hebrew, while the other is peculiar to the Greek version. These we shall refer to as H and G respectively. The former is found in 1 Kings xi. 26–31, 40, 43, xii. 1–24, 25–32. The second account comes in between verses 24 and 25 of ch. xii (xii. 24^{a-z}, in Swete's edition); and its variations are so striking and important that we give here first of all a summary of its contents:—

xii. 24^{a}. A notice of Solomon's death (‖ xi. 43), followed by the introductory formula for the reign of Rehoboam, in a form differing considerably from xiv. 21 ff. Thus (in B), Rehoboam is said to have been sixteen years old at his accession, and to have reigned twelve years; and his mother, Naamah, is described as the daughter of Ana the son of Nahash king of Ammon (cf. xiv. 21, 'the Ammonitess').

24^{b}. Jeroboam is now introduced (evidently for the first time) as an Ephraimite, a servant of Solomon, and son of a harlot named Sareisa (B) or Sareira (L) (cf. xi. 26). In the remainder of the section there is some confusion of text; but the probable sense of the original version is that Jeroboam was appointed overseer of the labour-bands of the house of Joseph, that he fortified Sareira, raised a force of 300 chariots, and rebelled against Solomon (‖ xi. 26–28).

24^{c}. Solomon seeks to kill Jeroboam, and the latter flees to Shishak king of Egypt, and remains with him till the death of Solomon (‖ xi. 40).

24^{d-f}. Jeroboam hears of the death of Solomon, and requests permission of Shishak to return to his land. Shishak objects, and gives him Anoth, the elder sister of his own wife, in marriage; and a son Abijah is born to them. Jeroboam renews his request for leave to depart; and comes to Sareira, where he collects all the tribes of Ephraim, and builds a fort (‖ xi. 43, LXX). The greater part of this section is plainly borrowed from the story of Hadad the Edomite (xi. 19–22), which no doubt represents here an interpolation in the original text.

24^{g-n}. The incident of the sickness of Jeroboam's son, and the consultation of the prophet Ahijah (‖ xiv. 1–18, Heb.; wanting in the present LXX). Ahijah is introduced as a personage hitherto unknown; the incident takes place at Sareira, and therefore before Jeroboam becomes king; his wife is called by her proper name Anoth, and not being a queen, of course does not

need to disguise herself. 24^{m} is in the style of the compiler of Kings, and pronounces a doom on Jeroboam's house for which no reason is assigned.

24^{n}. Jeroboam proceeds to Shechem and gathers there all the tribes of Israel; Rehoboam also comes to Shechem (‖ xii. 1).

24^{o}. Jeroboam is designated king of the ten tribes by the prophet Shemaiah (in place of Ahijah), with the symbolism of the rent garment (‖ xi. 29–31).

24^{p-s}. The people approach Rehoboam at Shechem with a petition for the redress of grievances; Rehoboam asks for a delay of three days, during which he consults first the elders and then the young men, and finally answers the people roughly in accordance with the advice of the latter (‖ xii. 3–14).

$24^{t,u}$. The people renounce their allegiance to the house of David, and disperse to their homes. Rehoboam returns to Jerusalem, followed by the tribes of Judah and Benjamin (‖ xii. 16).

24^{x}. At the turn of the year Rehoboam musters all Judah and Benjamin, and goes up to fight against Jeroboam at Shechem (‖ xii. 21).

$24^{y,z}$. The message of Shemaiah the man of God, given in terms practically identical with those of xii. 22–24.

Now, it is evident that this arrangement of the events of Jeroboam's career is an *alternative* version to that followed by the Hebrew, and could never have been intended to find a place alongside of it in the same work. It is therefore quite beside the point to argue that G is inferior to H because of the inconsistencies between xii. 24^{a-z} and the previous sections now found in the LXX; the main point at issue being precisely whether these other sections were in the original LXX, or were introduced in the course of redaction in order to assimilate that version more nearly to the Hebrew. There are, in fact, just two questions to be considered: (1) which of the two accounts is the more original; and (2) whether there can have been a recension of the Book of Kings in which G took the place of H.

(1) To the first question it is hardly possible to return a decided answer. We must bear in mind, to begin with, that part of the original H has been displaced by the compiler to make way for the oracle of Ahijah in xi. 32–39; so that in their accounts of Jeroboam's first rebellion the two records may have been in closer agreement than now appears. In the next place, it must be allowed that in the present form of the text G does not come well out of a comparison with H. The account it gives of Jeroboam's breach with Solomon is confused, and (in LXX (B) especially) quite unintelligible. The story of his marriage with an Egyptian princess comes in in an impossible place, and is, besides, an obvious adaptation of the similar incident in the story of Hadad. Ahijah's strong denunciation of Jeroboam's house before he had come to the throne

is an anachronism which cannot possibly be attributed to an independent writer. And, lastly, the oracle of Shemaiah, forbidding the people to go up to war with their brethren, is inconsistent with the previous statement that Rehoboam had already gone up against Shechem. But when we clear the text of certain excrescences—viz. the interpolated account of the marriage with Anoth (24^{o}), the closing sentence of the oracle of Ahijah (24^{m}, which is in the style of the compiler), and the warning of Shemaiah ($24^{y, z}$, which we have seen reason (p. 189) to mark as possibly a late addition to Kings)—we obtain a kernel narrative of the course of events whose inferiority to H is by no means obvious. The following points at least deserve consideration: (*a*) The account of Jeroboam's overt act of rebellion in 24^{b} supplies a better explanation of Solomon's desire to kill him than Ahijah's prophecy, which is expressly said to have been a private communication to Jeroboam of which no third party was aware. (*b*) The circumstances of Jeroboam's return to Ephraim (leaving out the episode of the marriage) are inserted at the proper point in the history ($24^{d, f}$), whereas we have found that in the other account neither LXX nor Hebrew has been able to find a perfectly suitable place for them (see on xi. 43, xii. 2). (*c*) With regard to the sickness of Abijah, there is room for difference of opinion; but if we disconnect the incident from the denunciation of Jeroboam's dynasty, and look on it simply as an event in the domestic history of Jeroboam, there is something to be said for the priority of G. It is difficult to conceive that any writer who found it in the form in which it appears in xiv. 1–18 should have reduced it to the simple proportions of xii. 24^{g-l}. (*d*) 24^{n} gives an explanation of the national congress at Shechem which we miss in H. (*e*) The statement that Rehoboam actually went to war with Jeroboam (24^{x}) is in itself credible, and is confirmed by xiv. 30. On the other hand, it may be felt that the mantle-rending incident of 24^{o} loses in significance by being postponed to a time when Jeroboam was engaged in active measures for seizing the crown.

Whatever may be thought of the relative value of the two accounts, it seems clear that they represent two distinct recensions of the Hebrew text, based independently on some earlier document. For if it is impossible to derive G from H, it is equally impossible to derive H directly from G. H's account of the proceedings at Shechem is a lucid and self-consistent narrative, marked off from G by its exclusion of Jeroboam from any share in the negotiations between the people and Rehoboam. The only serious gaps in the narrative of H are, (*a*) the account of Jeroboam's revolt under Solomon, and (*b*) the account of his return from Egypt, which, however, may be partly preserved in the LXX of xi. 43. Ch. xii. 20 clearly presupposes that his return was unknown till after the tribes had assembled in Shechem.

(2) The second question is whether we can suppose an edition of the Book of Kings in which G stood in the place of H. At first sight an affirmative answer is suggested by the circumstance that G is prefaced by an introductory formula for Rehoboam, which yet is independent of that in xiv. 21. Nevertheless it would be extremely rash to adopt that hypothesis, since it furnishes no explanation of the parallel account of H, which we have seen to be independent of G. Moreover, though G shows marks of the hand of the compiler, they are quite insignificant compared with the numerous traces of his activity in H.

It would appear, therefore, that for a solution of this very complicated problem we shall have to go behind the redaction of the book to the sources from which it was compiled. We know that for this period of the history the compiler had two (if not three) proximate sources at his disposal—the Chronicles of Judah and of Israel (if not also the History of Solomon). Now the account of Jeroboam's elevation to the throne belongs as much to the history of the one kingdom as of the other. Is it conceivable, then, that the original of one of our narratives (presumably G) was taken from KJ, and the other (H) from KI? The chief objection to that theory would be the fact that G contains so many details that would be irrelevant in a history of Judah. On the other hand, it has in its favour the fact that it is prefaced by the introductory notice for a king of Judah, and also the fact that it leads up to and breaks off with the account of the war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam, which was an event in the history of the southern kingdom. It is, to be sure, highly improbable that the compiler of Kings should have incorporated both these extracts in his work. But we have reason to believe that the sources were in existence long after the publication of the Book of Kings; and there is no difficulty in assuming that they were accessible to editors and copyists till a very late period. One of these we may suppose to have transcribed the second account of Jeroboam from KJ, and inserted it in his MS. Whether he did so with the intention of supplanting the other account entirely we cannot tell; but he is in all probability the person responsible for the omission of xiv. 1–18 in the LXX. The redactional additions and interpolations in G are presumably of still later date, and borrowed from the Hebrew text.

See further, Kuenen, *Onderzoek*, § 26, *n.* 10; W. R. Smith, *OTJC*[2], p. 117 ff.; Kittel, *History*, ii. p. 206 f.; Winckler, *Alttest. Untersuchungen*, p. 12 ff.; Benzinger, *Commentary*, p. 97 f.; Burney, *Notes*, p. 163 ff.

Note III. On the Chronology of the Reigns of Amaziah, Azariah, and Jeroboam II (p. 361).

It would be a great point gained if the two errors referred to in the note could be traced to a single source; and a noteworthy attempt in this direction has been made by F. Rühl, in *Deutsche Zeitschr. für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 1895, pp. 54–58, 171. The pivot of the theory is the statement of xiv. 17 (accepted by Rühl as historical) that Amaziah *lived* (not *reigned*) fifteen years after the death of Jehoash. This is taken to mean that after the battle of Beth-shemesh Amaziah was deposed by Jehoash, and that the next twenty-nine years or so were really an interregnum in the history of Judah: since Jehoash must have died soon after the battle, that period falls almost entirely under the reign of Jeroboam II. Rühl next argues that Azariah is not likely to have recovered his independence during the life of so powerful a monarch as Jeroboam II; and (accepting the synchronism of xv. 1 as resting on a sound tradition) concludes that Azariah's real reign commenced in the twenty-seventh of Jeroboam II, and also that Jeroboam II *died* in that same year! But it was natural for the chronologers of the kingdom of Judah to reckon the nominal reign of Azariah from the death of his father, who (as we see from xiv. 17) lived fourteen full years under Jeroboam II. The reign of Azariah was thus artificially lengthened by the difference between these fourteen years and the total length of the reign of Jeroboam, i. e. by about twelve or thirteen years; and out of the inevitable confusion between the real and the nominal reign of Azariah there arose naturally two serious miscalculations. (1) From the synchronism of xv. 1 it was concluded that the death of Amaziah had not taken place till the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam; and since it was still remembered that Jeroboam had survived Amaziah for thirteen years it became necessary to lengthen the reign of the former by about that period: accordingly an interpolator changed the duration of Jeroboam's reign from twenty-seven to forty-one years. But (2) a still later chronologist, combining the forty-one years' reign of Jeroboam with a plausible construction of xiv. 17, arrived at the conclusions that Azariah had come to the throne in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam, and that consequently the two monarchs had reigned contemporaneously for twenty-six or twenty-seven years. Since, as a matter of fact, Azariah only began to reign on the death of Jeroboam, this amounts to increasing his reign by twenty-six or twenty-seven years. We must therefore reduce the traditional fifty-two years of Azariah by that amount, and assign to him a real reign of only twenty-five or

twenty-six years. There is no particular reason why we should stop at this point. We might go on to imagine a stage at which Azariah's *real* reign was reckoned from the fifteenth year of Jeroboam, with the result that he survived the latter by about thirteen years; and then we could explain the synchronism of xv. 8 ('the thirty-eighth year') as a reckoning backward from the end of the fifty-two years' reign of Azariah. But this matter is not dealt with by Rühl. The truth is that the theory is too intricate and elastic to command acceptance. The misconceptions it attributes to successive chronologists are anything but natural; they are such as might occur to a modern writer working towards a definite result, but they do not follow obviously from the assumed data of the problem. It attaches a value to arbitrarily selected synchronisms which they do not possess; and ignores the really historical statement about the succession of Azariah in xiv. 21. Moreover, it requires us to abandon the fairly well established Assyrian synchronism of the tribute of Menahem in 738 (see on xv. 17 22); and by making the reign of Azariah as a whole posterior to that of Jeroboam II, it introduces confusion into the chronology of the prophets Amos and Hosea.

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